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ABSTRACT

The six chapters of this report provide an overview of the vocational education and training (VET) system in France. Chapter 1 contains general information, such as the political and administrative structures of the VET system, population statistics, and a profile of the French economy. Chapter 2 describes the education system and its evolution and funding. Chapter 3 provides background information on the VET system and an overview of initial and continuing vocational training. Chapter 4 looks at the statutory and financial framework of the VET system, while Chapter 5 focuses on the qualitative aspects of the system, including certification and qualification and training of teachers and trainers. The final chapter surveys current and future trends, including development factors and prospects for the future. Five appendixes include lists of acronyms, abbreviations and resource organizations; a bibliography listing 21 references; a glossary defining 17 words; and a digest of the main laws, regulations, and agreements on vocational training. (KC)

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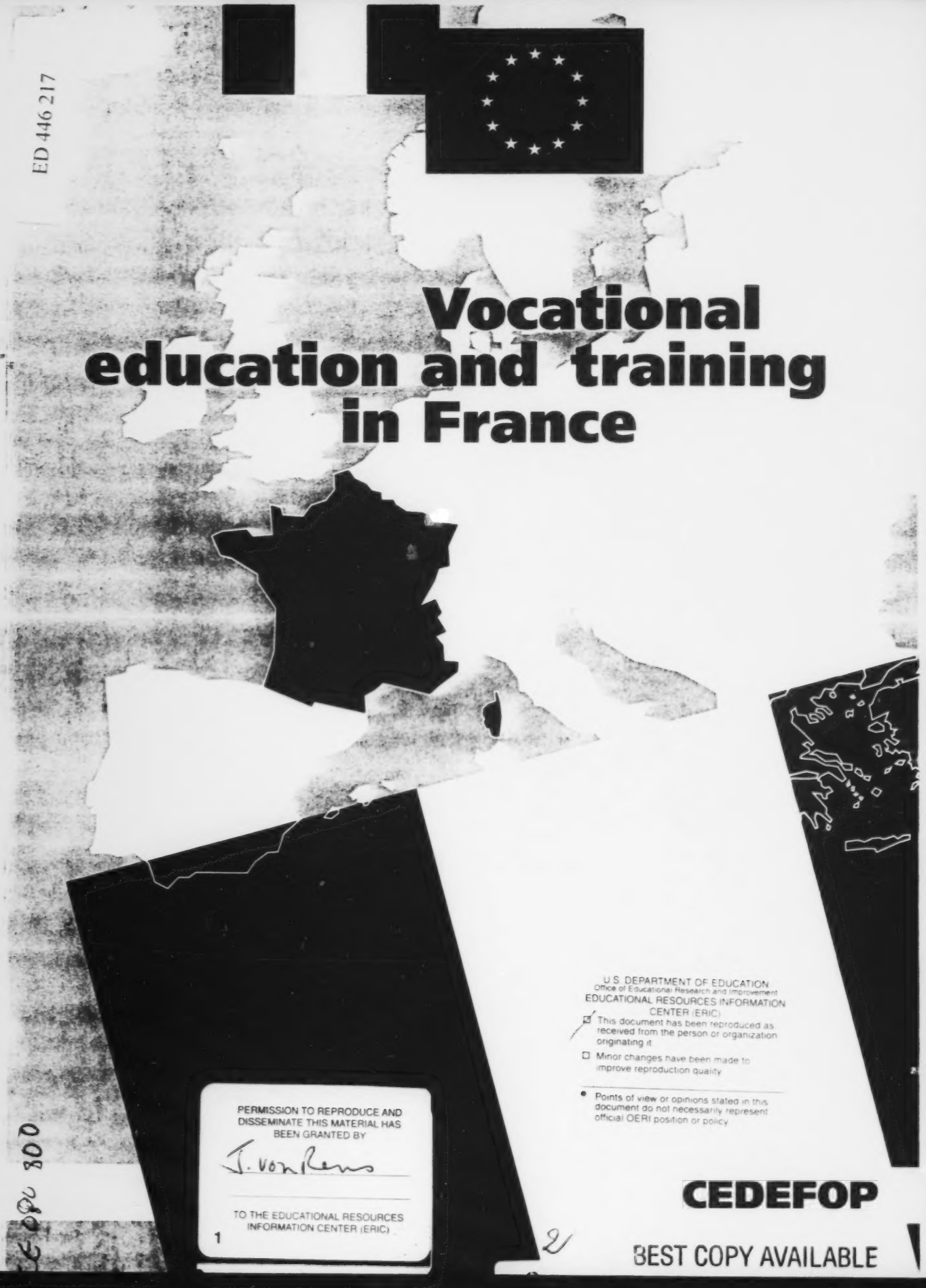

Vocational education and training in France

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CEDEFOP

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Vocational education and training in France

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A great deal of additional information on the European Union is available on the Internet. It can be accessed through the Europa server (http://europa.eu.int).

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CEDEFOP introduction

Objective and target groups

This description of the French vocational education and training system is an extended and updated edition of the monograph published in 1994 and is part of a new series of monographs that includes the three new Member States and the countries covered by the European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement. This new series extends the series of monographs published by Cedefop between 1993 and 1996 on the then 12 Member States. The objective is to present an overview of vocational education and training activities in France so that they are easily understood by interested 'foreigners'.

The target group includes those who may be responsible for, and concerned with, VET policy issues, researchers in this field, directors of vocational training departments or institutions, and trainers and teachers, whether they work at EU or Member State level, or for a governmental or social partner organisation. Some may be using the text at their desks as a reference document, others may be visiting the country concerned either on a study visit or to plan or execute a bi- or multi-lateral project and are more likely to wish to read the document from beginning to end.

Content and structure

The volumes in this series set out to describe initial and continuing vocational education and training (VET). As far as initial VET is concerned this means including provision which is in some cases the responsibility of Ministries for Education and in others of Ministries of Employment or Social Affairs. As far as continuing VET is concerned it requires coverage of provision for both the employed and unemployed, usually by a wide range of governmental bodies and ministries, by private and social partner organisations.

The structure of the report (see the list of contents) has been laid down in some detail by Cedefop, which has also placed limits on how long it should be. This is to make it easier for readers to make comparisons between the training systems in various EU Member States. The structure is, in general terms, similar to that adopted for the reports on the Member States commissioned in 1992, but there have been some changes such as the addition of a chapter on what we have called 'qualitative aspects', including information on certification, training of trainers and guidance.

Choice of author and consultation procedures

For this series Cedefop has tried to achieve a product which in some way is impossible. We wished to have a report written by an insider of the system concerned, but easily comprehensible to the outsider. It followed that the person/institution chosen as an author is an insider, located in the country being described and drafts the report in his mother tongue, unless he chooses to do otherwise. A further corollary of this was that Cedefop has tried to play the role of 'outsider' in discussions on the draft text, in order to draw authors' attention to places where the report was likely not to be easily understood by the public for which it is intended.

Cedefop has also stipulated that the authors must carry out a consultation on the draft with the main parties involved in VET in their country. This has meant their sending the draft not only to the various public bodies responsible for organising the system and providing VET, but also to the principal representative bodies of the social partners. The assistance of the members of the Cedefop's Management Board in the country concerned has in particular being requested in this connection.

Publishing and updating
It is Cedefop's intention, as long as the necessary resources are available, to publish these monographs in paper form in their original language and in English, French and German. In occasional and exceptional circumstances it may publish some monographs in additional languages. Experience has, however, shown that the time-scale involved in translating and publishing in hard-copy form and the rate of change in the systems described means that the reports can almost never be entirely up-to-date. Cedefop intends therefore also to use electronic means of publishing, including making the texts (or part of them) available on Cedefop's Internet site.

Comments and feed-back
As indicated above, Cedefop is conscious that in preparing this series it has had to make choices. We would very much appreciate having readers views as to whether we have made the right ones concerning the scope, content and structure of the report. We would be pleased to have your comments by letter, fax or e-mail.

Vocational education and training in France
One of the most interesting developments in the French VET system over recent years has been the increased use of alternance training at various levels, the aim being to organise training in such a way that it is closer to practice and so facilitate the transition to working life.

In the field of continuing vocational training the social partners play a particularly important role, which is also more often than not laid down in legislation. So, for example, it is by virtue of agreements between the social partners that enterprises are required to pay a tax to finance continuing vocational training.

Despite the crucial role of the public sector in the French VET system, there has recently been a large increase in the number of private training providers offering a wide range of training in various fields.

The initiatives recently undertaken by the French Government to decentralise initial and continuing vocational training to the regional and local levels have not been implemented at the same pace and with the same results in all the different regions. The recent introduction of the 35-hour week will also open up fresh possibilities for continuing vocational training.

The monograph was prepared by CIRCE, although the authors made use of the monograph prepared by Jean-Pierre Willems (Centre INFFO, Paris), published in 1994. The parts of the text that did not need modifying were left unchanged.

We hope that together we have provided the reader with a useful tool.

Stavros Stavrou
Deputy Director

J. Michael Adams
Reinhard Nobauer
Project Coordinators

Thessaloniki, January 1999

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Author's preface

In France it is not the practice to lump together the provision for school pupils and students (initial training) and the provision for the workforce – employed or unemployed – (continuing training) under the one heading of 'vocational training'. When the term *formation professionnelle* is used in France, it usually refers to continuing training with initial vocational training being described as *enseignement professionnel*. This distinction reflects the separation of the education system from the system of production. There has always been a sharp divide between the two in France, despite the development of alternance training systems and debate on the recognition of the workplace as a training venue.

This traditionally sharp distinction between initial and continuing training can give the impression that there are two systems existing side by side rather than one coherent system. The reforms initiated in recent years give us reason to believe that in the not too distant future there will no longer be two disconnected systems but a set of ways and means defined in terms of identical objectives. The drawing together of initial and continuing training will thus be one of the main issues in the coming years.

However, the main feature of the French system is the wealth and originality of the rules on continuing vocational training, on which this monograph will focus.

Vocational education and training in France

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France: regions and main cities

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Chapter 1
General information

1.1 Political and administrative structures

The French Republic

1.1.1
In the French Republic – the Fifth Republic – institutions are governed by the Constitution of 4 October 1958, as amended by a referendum held in 1962 (which introduced the election of the President of the Republic by universal suffrage).

The President is elected for seven years by direct universal suffrage. He appoints the Prime Minister and may dissolve the National Assembly. If a grave threat arises, he may exercise emergency powers.

The government is headed by the Prime Minister and appointed by the President, on a proposal by the Prime Minister. It decides on and conducts the affairs of the nation, and is answerable for its actions to the National Assembly. Within the government, the Minister for Education is responsible for, among other things, initial vocational training, while the Minister for Labour is responsible for continuing training.

Parliament is the legislature. It consists of two chambers: the National Assembly (579 deputies elected by direct universal suffrage for a term of five years) and the Senate (321 senators elected by indirect suffrage) representing the 'collectivités territoriales' (local authorities – see glossary). Both vote on legislation, but at the end of the day the National Assembly, which alone has the power to dismiss the government, can impose its point of view.

The *Conseil constitutionnel* (Constitutional Council) is responsible for compliance with the rules of the Constitution and for ensuring legislation complies with the Constitution.

1.1.2
Metropolitan France is divided into 22 regions and 96 *départements* and comprises almost 36 000 communes. The territory of France also includes four *départements d'outre-mer* (DOM – overseas *départements*, which are deemed to be regions from the point of view of competences): Guadeloupe, (French) Guiana, Martinique and Réunion. It also has three *territoires d'outre-mer* (TOM – overseas territories with special status): New Caledonia, Polynesia and Wallis & Futuna. Lastly, it has two *collectivités territoriales* whose status is midway between that of DOM and TOM: Mayotte and Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon.

1.1.3
France is a unitary State. With decentralisation, introduced after many long years' debate by the law of 2 March 1982 on the rights and liberties of decentralised 'territorial communities', three levels of decentralisation were introduced: the *commune*, the *département* and the region. Each of these authorities has legal personality and an elected executive (a municipal council, general council and regional council respectively).

1.1.4
The 1982 laws on decentralisation transferred many powers to the municipal councils, general councils and regional councils, especially for matters more closely affecting day-to-day life. The main fields in which powers were transferred were: town and country planning, housing, transport, the environment, culture, education, vocational training, social measures and health.

1.1.5
Education and training lay at the heart of the decentralisation laws passed in 1982 and 1983. The laws of 2 March 1982 and 7 January 1983 provided in this area for the transfer of part of the State's powers to local authorities, in particular the regional councils, but the decentralisation of education took a different form from that of vocational training.

Decentralisation of education

1.1.6
In education, powers were shared as follows: the State is responsible for the content of education, inspection and the sanctioning of studies and for staff; the local authorities are responsible for equipping and running educational establishments, with *départements* being given responsibility for *collèges* and regional councils for *lycées*. Local authorities can also define training needs within the region and establish an investment programme and decide on the location of the investment projects. Lastly, local authorities are represented on the boards of *lycées* and *collèges* and on consultative bodies.

1.1.7
Reality has overtaken the law, however, and the involvement of local authorities has in fact exceeded their strictly statutory responsibilities, especially as regards the volume of funding. For example, authorities already step in to finance the equipping of higher education establishments. Such funding is often provided in conjunction with the State, which asks local authorities to make a financial contribution while reaffirming the need for higher education to remain the responsibility of the State in order to guarantee equality of treatment.

Decentralisation of training

1.1.8
The law of 7 January 1983 gave regional councils competence in principle for vocational training, the State retaining competence only for assigning tasks to other bodies. This means that it intervenes in those sectors and on behalf of those groups specifically designated by the law, such as sectors and groups in difficulty.

1.1.9
After a transitional period, in the course of which regional councils merely took over measures previously administered by the State, in particular schemes targeted at jobseekers, it became possible to establish genuine regional policies (see sections 3.3.62 *et seq.*).

1.1.10
The decentralisation of vocational training launched in 1983 was followed up by the five-year law of 20 December 1993 on work, employment and vocational training. This law helped to establish the regional authority more firmly as the forum for the formulation and coordination of policies on initial and continuing training for the under-26s. The regions have been attributed the competences formerly exercised by the State in the field of youth training, through the transfer of the corresponding human and financial resources. Steps have also been taken to improve regional and local coordination of the efforts of the various parties: the State, the regions, the *Agence nationale pour l'emploi* (National Employment Agency), and youth induction, information, guidance and follow-up networks.

The State has retained its competence for the funding and organisation of general measures on apprenticeship and vocational training.

1.2 Population

Demographics

1.2.1
In 1996 France's total population was 58 265 400. As of 1 January 1996, 26.4 % of the population were aged under 20, 59 % were in the 20–64 age group and 14.6 % were aged 65 and over.

1.2.2
The age pyramid in France shows a general ageing of the population comparable with that in most other EU countries: the non-renewal of generations since the mid-1970s is a phenomenon common to all Member States. According to forecasts up to 2000 drawn up by INSEE (Institut national des statistiques et des études économiques), this ageing of the French population is likely to accentuate from 2005 on, when the 'baby boom' generations born between 1945 and 1973 reach their sixties. By 2020 the over-60s will account for more than 28 % of the population (compared with 19 % in 1990). The birth rate, at 12.3 ‰, is still higher than the European average (11 ‰ in EU-15).

Table 1. Population (*)

	1970	1980	1990	1997
Total (1 000)	50 772	53 880	56 735	58 604
Births (1 000)	848	800	762	725
Deaths (1 000)	540	547	526	534
Rates: (1 000)				
birth	16.7	14.9	13.4	12.4
death	10.6	10.2	9.3	9.1
infant mortality	18.2	10	7.3	5.1
marriage	7.8	6.2	5.1	4.9
Fertility indicator (children per woman)	2.5	1.9	1.8	1.7
Distribution by age on 1 January (%)	1970	1980	1990	1998
under 20	33.2	30.6	27.8	25.8
20 to 59	48.8	52.4	53.2	53.8
60 and over	18.0	17.0	19.0	20.4

(*) Metropolitan France.

SOURCE *INSEE* 1999.

Workforce

1.2.3

The workforce was 25 582 000 in January 1996. As of that date, the members of the workforce in employment numbered 22 430 000. The participation rate, 54.8 % in March 1996, is close to the Community average (55 %). At 62.7 %, it is higher for men than for women (47.6 %).

Since 1982 the workforce has grown by 1.5 million, essentially as a result of the increase in the number of working women. According to INSEE predictions, the workforce will rise to close to 26 million by 2005. Unless the birth rate picks up, the workforce will then decline until, by 2025, it returns to its 1985 level. According to INSEE, there are four ways of maintaining the workforce at its current level: immigration, raising the retirement age, an increase in the proportion of women entering the workforce and higher productivity. The decline in the workforce might have a beneficial effect on unemployment, but not necessarily so.

Figure 1. **Participation rate (population aged between 25 and 64) by sex – 1998 (%)**

SOURCE **EUROSTAT, 1998.**

1.3 The economy and employment

The economy

1.3.1
The late 1980s saw a series of good results for the French economy: a high growth rate, sustained industrial output, growth in industrial investment, job creation and inflation contained to between 3 and 3.5 % per year. The pattern changed in 1990 when growth fell to 2.6 %. After the recession in 1993 (with a fall in production and company investment), there was a significant upturn in 1994 with GDP growth of 2.9 % and a recovery in domestic demand. After the strong growth in 1994, economic activity fell back again sharply in 1995. The annual average growth in the French economy was slightly lower than in 1994 (2.1 % in 1995). Investment in production by all enterprises as a whole rose again in 1994 and 1995. This pattern continued in 1995, with an increase of 5.6 %. The improvement in the balance of trade has continued since 1991. The surplus in the balance of trade amounted to 2.4 % of the GDP in 1995.

1.3.2
Net job creation rose in 1995 (+ 155 000), a increase of 1.1 %, especially in the service sector. The improvement since 1994 has been particularly marked in trade services (+ 3.6 % in 1995), non-trade services (+ 1.9 % in 1995) and commerce (+ 1 % in 1995).

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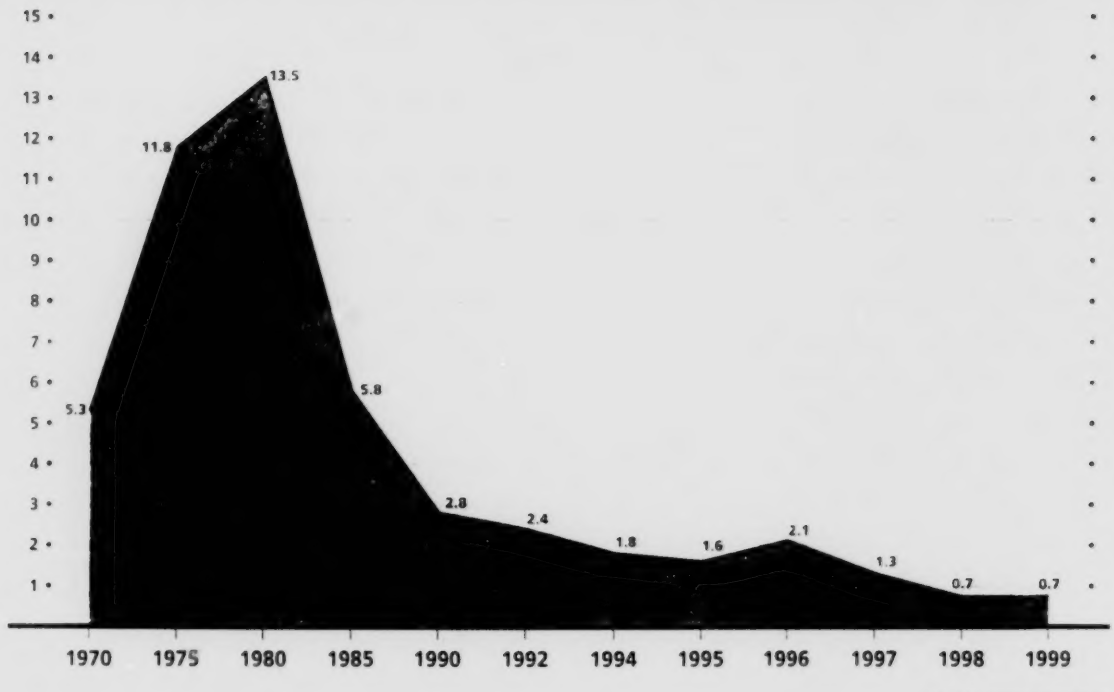
1.3.3
There has been, however, a fall in demand from households, which have been fairly cautious in their consumption. The purchasing power of households has risen appreciably (by 2.6 % in 1995), following an average annual increase of 1.4 % from 1991 to 1994.

1.3.4
The reduction in the national budget deficit is continuing, and the recovery in public finances continued in 1995. The social security accounts, however, continue to be considerably unbalanced, which has led the government to present a structural plan to rebalance them, based on a reform of the social security system designed to bring about a radical change in the social security system and to place it on a sounder and more sustainable financial footing.

Figure 2. **Inflation 1970 – 99** %



SOURCE *INSEE, EUROSTAT.*

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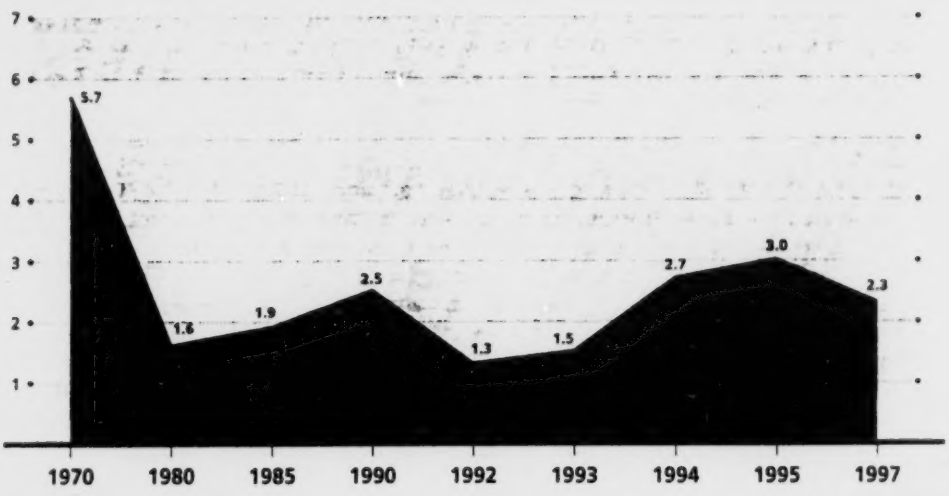
Figure 3. **GDP growth rate (%) 1970 – 97**



SOURCE **EUROSTAT**

Employment

1.3.5
There have been three major trends in the workforce over the past 25 years:

— a higher proportion of female workers, although this trend has slowed since 1985. This is mainly because women are now trained to a higher level than men and because of the greater concentration of women in the service sector, which has created many jobs over this same period. The participation rate for women aged 25–54, for example, has risen from 43 % in 1954 to 64 % in 1982 and 76.3 % in 1996;

— a decrease in the number of older employees, due to the retirement age being lowered to 60, and to social measures such as early retirement. The participation rate among men aged 60 to 64 has thus fallen from 40 % in 1982 to 17.2 % today (the corresponding percentage for women is 14.8 %).

— the fact that young people start work at a later age, the consequence both of extending the period of education and of the difficulties encountered by young people in finding their first jobs (see 2.2.4).

1.3.6
After the fall in employment from 1992 to 1994, the annual average increased in 1995 because of the strong upturn in activity in 1994. There was a particularly marked improvement in employment in 1995 in the manufacturing sector and in the commercial services sector (where the annual average increase was 1.9 %).

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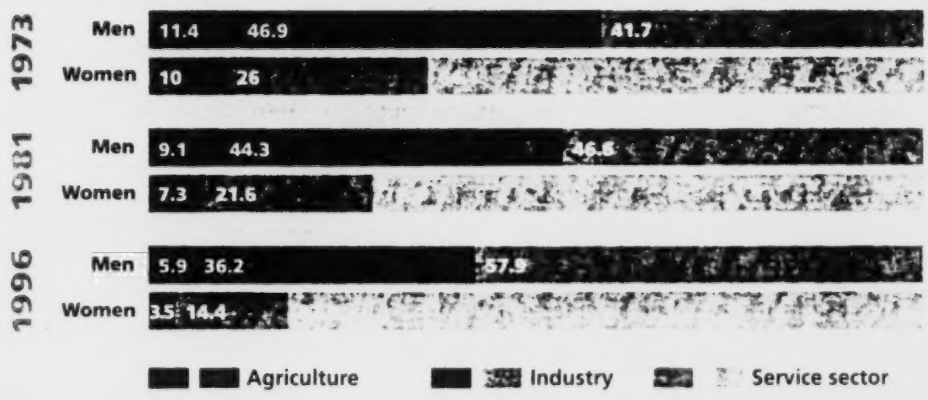
1.3.7
Looking at the forms of employment, we find that a feature of the past 15 years has been the development of atypical forms of employment compared with the traditional model of full-time employment and open-ended contracts of employment. In 1995, 27 % of employees had such 'atypical' jobs, 16 % of them being part-time workers and 11 % under contract for a specific period. These jobs are taken mainly by young people and women.

1.3.8
The rise of part-time working has accelerated since 1992, following the incentives introduced by the authorities. Even so, recourse to part-time working is still low in France, compared with the level in other European Union countries.

1.3.9
Finally, despite the decline in the number of farmers, the number of self-employed has been increasing since 1985, essentially due to new businesses being started up in the service sector. There have been several reasons for this trend: the fact that middle managers have been setting up on their own account as service providers, the sub-contracting practised by large firms, 'covert sub-contracting' or the placement of employment contracts outside the workplace, and the aid for new business creation offered by the authorities.

Figure 4. **Employees by economic sector in % – men/women**



SOURCE **EUROSTAT – LABOUR FORCE SURVEY.**

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Unemployment

1.3.10
The revival in job creation in 1994 merely stabilised the level of unemployment. Between March 1995 and March 1996, the number of unemployed, 3 099 000, increased by 163 000, so that in September 1996 the unemployed represented 12.6 % of the workforce (whereas in 1990 the rate had dropped to below the 9 % level). In comparison, the rate of unemployment was 10.8 % as of the same date.

1.3.11
The rising rate of unemployment over the past few years has been a direct result of the decline in recruitment combined with redundancies. In 1996 employment is still the priority goal for the government, which has embarked on exceptional spending, especially to combat long-term unemployment and youth unemployment.
The analyses show that what is needed is sustained and above all lasting economic growth to counteract under-employment.

Table 2. The rate of unemployment in %

	1969	1979	1989	1995
Rate of unemployment by age group				
15-24	3.3	14.5	20.5	23.6
25-49	1.0	4.1	8.5	10.7
50 and over	1.8	3.9	6.9	8.2
	1975	**1985**	**1990**	**1995**
In the 15-29 age group				
by diploma held				
Higher	3.6	6.4	5.5	12.2
Bac	4.5	13.1	10.2	16.0
BEPC, CAP, BEP (*)	5.1	17.4	13.6	19.0
None	8.9	29.2	26.7	33.2
Total 15-29	5.8	18.6	15.0	19.5
by sex				
	1969	**1979**	**1995**	
Men	1.4	4.1	9.8	
Women	2.0	7.9	13.9	
Overall rate of unemployment	**1.6**	**5.6**	**11.8**	

(*) See Annex 1: Abbreviations

SOURCE INSEE, MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS.

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1.3.12

This table shows three forms of inequality associated with age, sex and qualifications. Firstly, youth unemployment made its appearance in the mid-1970s and has not been stemmed; the overall effect of various plans to promote young people's employment and measures for their integration into the working world was merely to slow down the growth in joblessness. Unemployment has risen sharply among young people in recent years, with 24 % of the under-25s in the workforce being jobless. The integration of young people is one of the most urgent issues facing French society (see 3.2.34). The risk of unemployment faced by young people still varies a good deal, depending on their standard of training. In 1995, one third of the non-graduate workforce aged 15 to 29 were unemployed, compared with only 12 % of young people with higher education degrees.

Unemployment among graduates has also been a major issue over the past few years. The rate of jobless young graduates has doubled from 5.5 % in 1990 to 12 % in 1995.

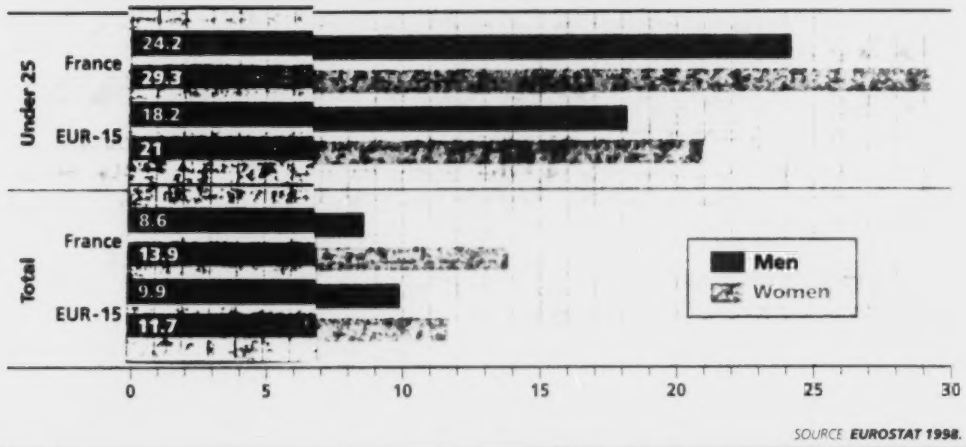
The second striking point relates to female unemployment. Whereas there has been a steady rise in the participation rate among women, female unemployment is still higher than male unemployment, not just in percentage terms but also in volume (14.7 % compared with 10.8 % in 1994).

The third inequality is in socio-occupational groups. The unemployment rates reveal the need for skilled manpower and the difficulty in upgrading the low-skilled unemployed. The breakdown of unemployment by skills has altered slightly. There is a substantial rise in unemployment among manual workers. Between 1995 and 1996, the rate rose from 14.2 % to 15.3 %, whereas unemployment among clerical workers levelled off at 14.8 %.

The risk of unemployment also varies from region to region. An analysis of the situation in areas of employment in France has shown the disparities between the regions where the unemployed find it hardest to obtain work (Nord - Pas-de-Calais) and those with a more dynamic labour market (Alsace, Franche-Comté, Rhône-Alpes).

The figure below shows the extent of youth unemployment.

Figure 5. **Unemployment rate by sex and age, 1998 (%)**



SOURCE **EUROSTAT 1998.**

Long-term unemployment

1.3.13
The number of long-term unemployed has risen from 60 000 in 1974 to 786 000 in December 1990 and 1 059 400 in 1995. In December 1995, the number of jobseekers registered with Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi (ANPE – National Employment Agency) for more than a year accounted for 34.4 % of the total number registered.

1.3.14
An analysis of the long-term unemployed highlights the over-representation of women and the low-skilled. The State is continuing its efforts in favour of the long-term unemployed, and the recent trend has been for their number to stabilise. The rapid development of the initiative-employment contract (*contrat initiative-emploi* see 3.3.51), introduced in July 1995 and then reorganised in 1996, has helped to reduce slightly the number of long-term unemployed. The number of employment contracts signed with this category of the jobless continued to rise in 1995. The Contract has become the main measure promoting employment in the commercial sector, with a significant impact on trends in long-term unemployment.

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1.3.15
Quite apart from statistics and proposals, long-term employment in France raises the problem of a two-tier society. Reducing long-term unemployment will depend not only on economic growth but also on the ability of society to refuse to exclude groups of people in difficulties.

Foreign manpower

1.3.16
According to a 1994 INSEE survey, the number of foreign members of the workforce is 1 518 000, i.e. 6.1 % of the total workforce in France. In comparison, the percentage is close to the percentage of foreigners in the total population: 6 % as of this date.

1.3.17
The following conclusions can be drawn from an analysis of the survey findings:

— among the foreigners working in France, over 938 000 are manual workers (58 %). Adding the number of people employed in direct services to individuals, these two categories alone account for 67 % of the foreign workforce;

— the Portuguese are still the largest group of foreign nationals working in France (27 %), followed by the Algerians (15.2 %);

— the 1980s were marked by a refocusing of industrial activity, one consequence of which was a mass shift of labour from industry to the service sector. This tendency has been particularly marked for foreigners in employment. The service industry is now the sector employing the most foreigners, with 49.8 % of foreigners working there, i.e. more than in industry and the building sector combined.

— the presence of foreigners varies a good deal depending on the sector of the economy. There are virtually no foreigners in certain sectors (banks, where less than 1 % of staff are foreign). In the building industry, on the other hand, one employee out of five is foreign.

— the skill levels of those in employment are relatively stable, although they differ considerably depending on nationality. EC nationals, apart from Italians, Spanish and Portuguese, are on the whole managerial staff, technicians or to a lesser degree foremen; they constitute only a small proportion of blue-collar workers. In other words the breakdown is exactly the opposite to that of all other nationalities.

— almost half of foreign nationals in employment work in the *Île-de-France* region. The region of *Rhône-Alpes* is the second largest region in terms of numbers of foreign employees.

Table 3. **Foreign labour (%)**

Nationality	1982	1985	1988	1991	1995
Portuguese	27.6	28.4	28.9	27.0	28.2
Italian	8.4	7.8	6.9	6.0	5.3
Spanish	7.8	7.3	6.4	5.4	4.9
Other EU (1)	3.2	3.7	3.8	4.4	5.4
Other Europeans (2)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.2
Algerians	22.2	19.9	19.3	18.6	17.3
Moroccans	11.8	11.9	12.8	13.5	13.6
Tunisians	4.9	4.7	4.9	4.7	4.3
Black Africans	3.9	4.6	5.3	7.1	7.6
Turks	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.5	3.9
Yugoslavs	2.5	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.0
Cambodians, Laotians, Vietnamese	1.9	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1
Other nationalities (3)	2.8	4.3	4.4	5.3	4.2
Total – all nationalities	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
of which: EU	*47.0*	*47.2*	*46.0*	*42.9*	*43.9*
of which: Maghreb	*38.9*	*36.5*	*37.0*	*36.7*	*35.2*

(1) Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom.
(2) Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Switzerland, former USSR.
(3) This group excludes European nationals and people from the Maghreb, black Africa, Yugoslavia, Turkey, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam.

n.a.: no figures available

SOURCE *MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT AND SOLIDARITY, DARES DOSSIERS, ISSUE 8*

Table 4. **Breakdown of foreign workers by major economic sector and nationality in 1995**

Sector	Spanish	Italian	Portuguese	other EU	former Yugoslavia	other Europeans	Algerians	Moroccans	Tunisians	black French-speaking Africans	Other Africans	Turks	Cambodians, Laotians, Vietnamese	Other Asians	Other nationalities and stateless people
Industry	36.2	39.9	31.3	29.9	40.7	25.1	28.8	37.9	27.0	22.0	14.6	54.4	53.3	14.9	16.7
Building and Public works	21.3	23.7	33.0	2.2	13.5	11.2	27.9	22.3	24.9	8.4	13.1	26.6	3.2	1.9	7.9
Service	42.4	36.7	35.8	67.9	45.8	63.7	46.3	39.8	48.1	69.6	72.3	19.0	43.5	83.2	75.4
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

SOURCE *MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT AND SOLIDARITY, LES DOSSIERS DE LA DARES, NO. 8. LES SALARIÉS ÉTRANGERS AU 31 DECEMBRE 1995. JANUARY 1998*

Chapter 2
The education system

2.1 General description of the education system

2.1.1
The French education system can be described as national, unitary and centralised. It is national in that the 1958 Constitution grants the State the predominant role in education. It is unitary in that it is run by the public education authority, administered directly by the State through the Ministry of Education. It remains centralised by virtue of the principles of equal treatment for all and the provision by the Republic of education for every citizen.

There are limits, however, to these three characteristic features. The national nature of the education system and its centralisation are tempered by the growing involvement of local authorities in its running (see 1.1.6 *et seq.*). The unitary nature of the public service does not imply uniformity: freedom of education means that private education can exist at every level (out of France's school and student population of 15 million, 12 million are being educated in the public sector and some 3 million in private-sector establishments, most of them denominational).

2.1.2
In France, compulsory schooling starts at the age of six. The education system, the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Research, is made up of three *degrés*, or levels of education, which are subdivided into *cycles*.

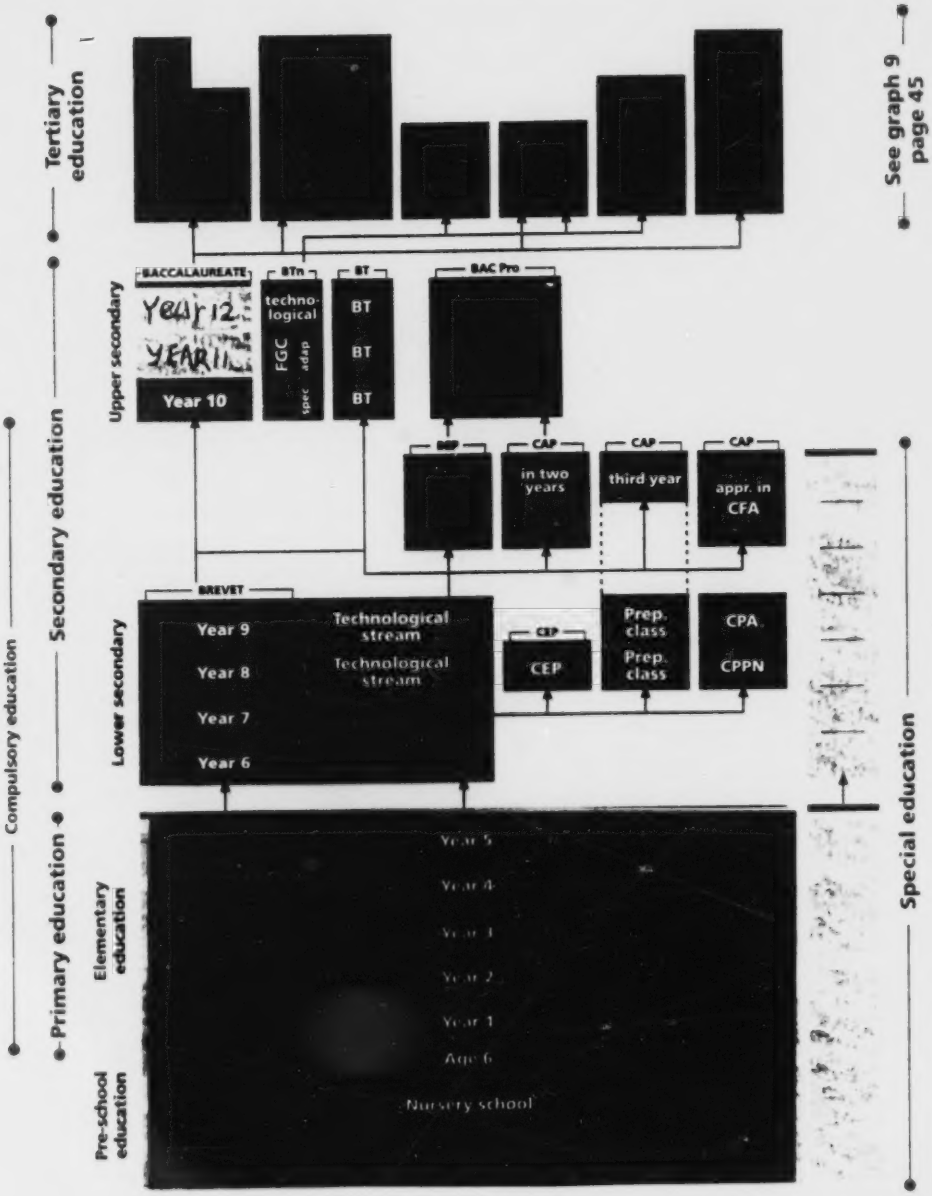
— the primary level consists of pre-school and elementary education, provided in nursery and primary schools.

— at the secondary level, the first cycle of education is provided in *collèges*, or lower secondary schools, and the second cycle is provided in *lycées d'enseignement général* and *lycées professionnels* (the second-cycle general, technical and vocational streams).

— tertiary education is provided in universities but also in lycées (preparatory years and courses leading to the national certificate for skilled technicians – BTS), *grandes écoles* and certain specialist colleges and universities.

2.1.3
In 1996, the school population, estimated at close to 15 million, amounted to about 25 % of the total population. There were 6.5 million in primary education, 5.9 million in secondary education and 2.1 million in tertiary education. Public- and private-sector educational establishments numbered about 72 000. There were 778 800 teachers in schools and higher education, 62 % of them women.

Figure 6. **The education system in France**



Each row stands for one year of education, except in the case of pre-school education (ages 2 to 5) and higher education

BAC Pro: Vocational baccalaureate - **BEP**: Vocational studies certificate
BT: Technician's diploma - **BTn**: Technological baccalaureate
BTS: CAP: Vocational aptitude course - **CEP**:Certificate of vocational education
CFA: Apprentice training centre - **CPA**: Pre-apprenticeship class
CPPN: Pre-vocational class

Final examination
Main education route on completion
Main transitional route

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SOURCE ***MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH AND SPORTS. REPÈRES ET RÉFÉRENCES STATISTIQUES SUR LES ENSEIGNEMENTS DE LA FORMATION.***

2.2 Evolution of the education system

2.2.1
The rapid changes in the education system taking place over the past 15 years, generated by the pressure of demand for education and by a deliberate policy, have meant that France could increase the numbers in secondary and higher education. The doubling of the numbers acquiring a baccalaureate in a generation and the move towards mass higher education have meant that young people are entering the working world at a later age. These developments have led to problems with job opportunities for graduates and have made it all the harder for young people leaving school without certificates to find work. This has helped to fuel the debate on the links between the education and training system and the world of work.

2.2.2
The French education system has undergone a major transformation since the early 1980s, when education policy-makers – in an effort to make up for France lagging somewhat in education achievement – set a target of 80 % of the school population taking the baccalaureate. In 1980, only one out of five of the workforce held a baccalaureate or a higher education degree. The gap has been partially closed since then, with more and more pupils taking the baccalaureate and with growing access to higher education (see 3.3.23). The percentage reaching baccalaureate level has doubled since 1980: 63 % of the generation now holds a baccalaureate, compared with less than 30 % 15 years ago.

2.2.3
The growing numbers of young people passing the baccalaureate have gone on to further education. There are now 2.1 million students in higher education, 1.4 million of whom are enrolled in universities. The duration of higher education is now longer than in the early 1980s. At the same time, the percentage of 16- to 24-year-olds in employment has dropped sharply over the past 10 years: at 39 % in 1994, it is one of the lowest in the European Union.

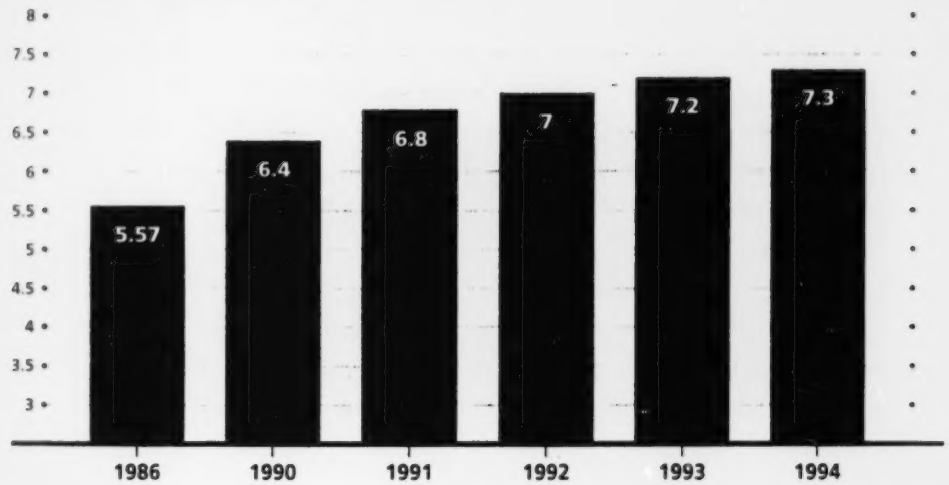
2.2.4
Parallel to these developments, the level of training of the workforce has risen. In 1995, less than one-third of the workforce had no diploma, compared with about 60 % in the early 1970s.

Nevertheless, growth in the demand for skilled labour has been too slow to absorb the rising numbers of those with diplomas. Their integration into the labour market has become more precarious than before, as evidenced by the rise in unemployment among young graduates and diploma-holders and the more temporary nature of their first jobs.

2.3 Funding of the education system

2.3.1
In 1995 France spent FRF 563 000 million on its education system, i.e. 7.3 % of GDP; FRF 414 000 million of this went on primary and lower and upper secondary education. This expenditure is funded by the State (61.8 % of the total), local authorities, employers and households, representing an average of about FRF 7 100 francs per head of population (ECU 1 092). Domestic expenditure on education has risen by over 81.5 % since 1974, an annual growth rate of about 2.9 %.

Figure 7. Domestic expenditure on education – France (% of GDP)



SOURCE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, EDUCATION ACCOUNTS 1991 – 1994.

2.3.2
Spending on higher education in 1995 amounted to FRF 91 500 million, i.e. 16.2 % of domestic expenditure on education and 1.2 % of GDP.

2.3.3
The appropriations earmarked for school and higher education amounted to FRF 317 000 million in 1996. The new appropriations for school education were mainly intended for setting up special support for pupils in difficulties, facilities for pupils entering secondary education and the plan to enhance the standing of the teaching profession (the objectives of the New Contract for Schools). In higher education, following the commitments set out in the University 2000 Plan, there should be adequate resources to allow for an increase in the capacity to admit new students (creation of teaching jobs, the development of infrastructure and the maintenance of teaching establishments)

Chapter 3 The vocational education and training system

3.1 Background

3.1.1
The history of vocational training in France shows that constant efforts have been devoted to the training of elites over the past three centuries, but it has been far harder for the vocational training of other population groups – young and adults – to emerge.

The laborious emergence of vocational training in France

3.1.2
As far back as in the 18th century, *écoles supérieures techniques* were created to train professionals for the country (*École des Ponts et Chaussées* in 1747, *École des Mines* in 1783, etc.). The French Revolution of 1789 carried on the work initiated by the monarchy by creating the *Ecole polytechnique* in 1794 and then the *Conservatoire national des arts et métiers* (CNAM). Vocational training, in other words, was primarily for engineers and technicians.

3.1.3
On the other hand, the Revolution dealt a fatal blow to apprenticeship by abolishing *corporations* (guilds) in 1791.

It was not until 1919 and the Astier law that apprenticeship was resuscitated. This law established free, compulsory vocational courses for apprentices trained by employers. Funded by the communes, from 1925 these courses received a contribution from an apprenticeship tax paid by employers.

3.1.4
The system existing before 1945, therefore, was structured on three levels:

— at the higher level, *écoles supérieures techniques* (higher technical schools);

— at the intermediate level, establishments set up as a result of an 1880 law;

— at the first level of skills, apprenticeship centres.

A point of note is that in France, once the *corporations* had disappeared, the only place where training could in fact be established was in the public and general education system. Teaching by church bodies, the unions and employers has always existed of course, but it was never on the same scale as in other countries.

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Figure 8. **Evolution of the vocational training system**

1949 Establishment of adult vocational training centres (FPA)
1950
1958
1959 Law on social advancement
1959 Law on union training
1960
1961 Law on popular education
1962
1963 Establishment of the National Employment Fund (FNE)
1964 Establishment of higher technical sections (BTS)
1965
1966 Establishment of university institutes of technology (IUT)
1967
1968 Law on remuneration arrangements for vocational training actions
1968 Grenelle Agreements
1969
1970 Manteltarifvertragliche Vereinbarungen über die Grundlagen des Berufsbildungssystems
1971 Agreement on the basis for vocational training
1972
1973
1974 Post-school vocational training system
1975
1981
1982 Schwartz report on the integration of young people
1983 Decentralisation of education and vocational training
1984 Reform of vocational training (Law of 24 February)
1985
1986
1987 Launching of training plans for the long-term unemployed
1987 Establishment of vocational baccalaureate
1988
1989 Guidance law, setting target of 80% of young people reaching Level IV by year 2000
1989 Establishment of training entitlement
1990 Law on vocational training monitoring and quality
1991 Social partners' agreement on vocational training
Establishment of vocationalised university institutes (IUP)
1992 Law on apprenticeship
1993 Five-year law on work, employment and vocational training (Law of 20 December)
1994 Reform of fund collection bodies – creation of OPCAs
1995
1996 Reform of the funding of apprenticeship (Law of 6 May)

The birth of the present-day system

3.1.5
Vocational training, above all continuing training, did not really make its appearance until after the Second World War. With the demands of reconstruction, a major effort had to be made to train up manpower of working age. The establishment of *Centres de formation professionnelle accélérée* (FPA – accelerated vocational training centres – later to become *Centres de formation professionnelle adultes* – adult vocational training centres) was a response to this need. The State assumed responsibility for funding these centres, whose aim was to teach skills to adults in short courses (usually six months). In 1949 the running of the centres was entrusted to the *Association nationale interprofessionnelle pour la formation rationnelle de la main d'œuvre* (ANIFRMO – national inter-industry association for rational manpower training), later to become AFPA (see 4.1.15).

3.1.6
With the economic growth of the post-war period, and even more the early 1960s, there was a growing demand from employers for skilled manpower. Not finding what they needed in initial training, they turned to the existing adult training institutions. The initial response from the authorities to employers' needs, but also to employees' aspirations, was the Gaullist social programme. Michel Debré, the then Prime Minister, launched a major *promotion sociale* (social advancement) project designed to provide everybody wishing to take vocational training with the means to do so. Three laws were introduced to implement this plan: the law of July 1959 on social advancement (the principles laid down in this law would later serve as the basis for the development of a continuing vocational training system), the law of December 1959 on training provided by the unions, and the law of December 1961 on adult education.

3.1.7
The law of July 1959 provided great impetus for the social advancement centres. It took an individual approach to training. Training was offered to anyone who wished to take courses outside working hours. In providing everybody with the means to get on, the authorities felt they had met the need for social justice. This law, however, was not enough to meet the needs of the economy.

3.1.8
In 1963 the *Fonds National pour l'Emploi* (FNE – national employment fund) was set up with the task of supporting industrial restructuring, in particular through training schemes for employees laid off or under the threat of redundancy. In parallel, the education system was also meeting employers' needs for technicians and middle management by setting up sections for advanced technicians in 1964 and issuing *Brevets de Techniciens Supérieurs* (BTS – advanced technicians' diplomas). Two years later, the *Instituts Universitaires de Technologie* (UIT – university institutes of technology) started courses leading to the *Diplôme Universitaire de Technologie* (DUT – university diploma in technology). These shorter tertiary courses, offering a two-year period of study for each diploma, proved popular, and their success continues today.

3.1.9
To extend and implement all the principles laid down by the law of July 1959, on 3 December 1966 a new law was enacted fleshing out the existing system. However, this law on vocational training also included a major innovation: the right of employees to personal training leave. This structure was supplemented by a law of 31 December 1968, which appears to have completed the system by defining the remuneration arrangements for the various vocational training measures.

3.1.10
Nevertheless, for various reasons the system as a whole was subsequently revised, even though many of the provisions of the laws of 1959, 1963 and 1966 were retained. The factors bringing about the general review of this system as a whole came under four headings:

- **Economic factors**
  These have already been mentioned: they reflected employers' needs for technicians and middle management. According to a survey by the metallurgical industry employers' association in 1965, 80 % of technicians and engineers did not hold a diploma corresponding to the job they performed. So it was vital to find ways of training employees.

- **Social factors**
  The growth period of the 1960s, the arrival of the consumer society and the wish for personal development in order to take fuller advantage of that consumer society were also factors motivating employees to grasp every training opportunity on offer. The desire for training was particularly prominent among the groups born before the war, i.e. those aged between 25 and 35 in the 1960s.

- **School-related factors**
  The initial education system displayed serious inadequacies during the 1960s. Two-thirds of young people started their working lives without certificated training. Furthermore, in those years there were great disparities in the education system. Fewer than 10 % of the children of rural and blue-collar workers, who at the time represented more than half the workforce, went on to higher education. The children of senior management and professional parents, who accounted for only 6 % of the workforce, made up almost half of the student body at university and even more in the *grandes écoles*. A second chance for those who had left the education system was therefore seen as vital, and undoubtedly this inadequacy of initial vocational education was the main cause of the development of the French continuing training system.

- **The political factors**
  Political factors tend to be the immediate causes for the creation of a continuing training system, rather than be the deep-rooted causes, which are better explained by the factors described above. Following the events of May 1968, the Grenelle agreements ended the strikes and the workplace sit-ins and embodied the commitment of the two sides of industry to negotiate in individual sectors of industry or at the inter-industry level on a number of subjects, and the government's commitment to legislate in certain fields, for example on recognition of the role of the unions in the workplace.

Vocational training, which had not previously been an express union demand except in the case of managerial unions, was placed on the agenda in collective bargaining. The negotiations initiated after the Grenelle agreements in fact led to the agreement of 9 July 1970, later to be embodied in the law of 16 July 1971. These two documents are the foundation of the French vocational training system today.

Twenty-five years of continuing vocational training

A) The institutionalisation of training policies

3.1.11
In the early 1970s, the social partners and the State set up a system for the management of training policies which was never to be fundamentally challenged, despite the developments in the role of training. An important point is the essential part played by the two sides of industry in creating the system. The method of embodying agreements reached through collective bargaining in law or regulations (see 3.1.2), one that was decided upon right from the start, has hardly changed since then. The agreement of 3 July 1991 was typical in this respect, since the law took over the essentials of its original provisions without disrupting the general scheme of the text or the guidelines it laid down.

3.1.12
The agreement of 9 July 1970 established principles reflecting the individual – perhaps even individualistic – concept of vocational training which prevailed at the time, as well as the demand for the introduction of some employees' participation in company management. The first principle reflects the adoption of the employee's right, no longer merely the opportunity, to be absent from the workplace for the purpose of training during his working hours. From this aspiration emerged the personal training leave (*congé individuel de formation* – CIF). The second principle reflects the responsibility assigned to works committees for training, even though this responsibility is exercised only through consultation, not through the power to take decisions.

3.1.13
The law of 16 July 1971 made vocational training part of lifelong education, at the same time expressing lofty ambitions: training should not only promote personal development and economic growth but should combat inequality of opportunity and help the education system to become less inward-looking. According to Jacques Delors, who gave his name to the 1971 law, the aim in instituting the right to continuing training was to affect initial training as well. The consensus that existed between the social partners and the State was regarded as a major step towards achieving this ambition.

3.1.14
In terms of content, the 1971 law incorporated the main provisions of the agreement and laid down the principle that employers should fund continuing training. A levy amounting to 0.8 % of the wage bill had to be devoted each year by employers to the financing of continuing training. The employer could spend these amounts on training its own employees, or could negotiate training agreements with public- or private-sector training centres; alternatively, it could contribute

towards a *Fonds d'assurance formation* (training insurance fund) or finance training centres that ran vocational training for jobseekers.

3.1.15
The idea of such funds had previously been introduced by the law of 3 December 1968, but without success. Now they were at the heart of the financing system. The funds were agencies set up by a collective agreement or framework agreement between employers' and employees' organisations to collect the employers' compulsory contribution and use it to finance training schemes for employees of the companies within their sphere of competence.

3.1.16
The 1971 law, therefore, laid down the principle that the employer should finance continuing training and that the social partners should be able to administer the funds. All financial transactions were conducted under the supervision of the State through the *Groupe national de contrôle de la formation professionnelle* (national group for the supervision of vocational training), which was set up for the purpose. The main features of the continuing training system were thus established in these two founding laws: the right of employees to training, the financing of that training by employers, fiscal supervision by the State and social supervision by the social partners (through works committees or training insurance funds).

B) From lifelong education to the management of employment

3.1.17
Even though the State already intervened in the field of training, especially – as we have discussed – through the *Fonds national de l'emploi* set up in 1963 and the *Centres de formation professionnelle adultes*, the 1971 law gave the State a regulatory role rather than powers to intervene directly. Developments in the economic situation changed this approach considerably. In 1974 the first oil crisis marked the end of what had been called the 'thirty glorious years', in other words the 30 years after the Second World War, a time of economic growth and full employment. Then came what was at the time called the recession, marking the beginning of a radical change in Western economies. It led to a steep rise in unemployment, particularly among young people. The measures adopted to promote youth employment institutionalised intervention by the authorities and the State's management of a post-school system of vocational training.

3.1.18
The scope of this action by the authorities was extended during the 1980s, first through decentralisation, under which regions were granted basic competence for training, thus introducing a new player into the training landscape, and later through State action to combat unemployment, in particular long-term unemployment. In 1986, for example, for the first time since 1971, the State allocated more money to vocational training than employers did. Public funding (State plus regions) today totals about two-thirds of the amount spent on continuing training (see 4.2.2).

C) Adapting the system to a modern economy

3.1.19
The change of government in 1981 led not only to the decentralisation of competences in 1983 but also to a review of vocational training. The then Minister for Vocational Training called for the system that had been set up in 1971 to be adapted to meet the needs of the changing economy. The reforms introduced by the inter-industry agreements of September 1982 and October 1983, as well as the law of January 1984 on vocational training, followed along the same lines as previous legislation, which they amended rather than overturned.

3.1.20
The contributions made by these pieces of legislation were as follows:

— the national inter-industry agreement of 21 September 1982 laid down the principle that the employer should fund the training plan and personal training leave separately. Henceforth that training leave would be funded by a levy of 0.1 % of the wage bill, which every enterprise employing 10 or more people had to pay to an approved agency. This agency then granted funds for the personal training leave of those employees applying for it. By externalising the system of funding personal training leave, rather than the idea prevailing for a time that a contribution similar to that of paid holidays be made, the success of the measure was assured;

— the national inter-industry agreement of 26 October 1983 set up a number of alternance training measures for young people. They included, the *contrat de qualification* (qualification contract) and the *contrat d'adaptation* (adaptation contract), which were special employment contracts designed to promote the integration of young people into the working world by combining work, training and financial benefits for the employer, in particular exemptions from social security contributions (see 3.2.49);

— the law of 24 February 1984 closely reflected the content of the two preceding agreements, thus ensuring the general application of the measures created by the social partners. The law also established the obligation to negotiate on training at the level of individual sectors of industry and, failing such negotiations, at company level. Finally, the law undertook to regulate the training market more closely by imposing a number of obligations on training agencies.

3.1.21
This intensive legislation and regulation not only added to the existing measures but meant that many more parties were involved. Once the initial period of building up and developing the system came to an end, it became necessary to consider how it could be rationalised and made more effective.

D) Rationalisation of the system

3.1.22
The system can be seen as the latest phase of development in the vocational training system. This action was launched in 1988 and was based on two main ideas. The first was that some order should be imposed on a set of measures which had been brought into existence over the years and on occasions survived for no good reason, or for a good reason long since forgotten. The State therefore regrouped the various arrangements for practical placements and centred them on more broadly defined target groups. This meant that, in addition to the alternance training set up by the social partners, young people could take advantage of *crédit formation* (training entitlement – see 3.2.69) and adult jobseekers could take advantage of occupational integration and training schemes (see 3.3.48).

3.1.23
The second action was directed towards the training market. The aim was twofold: to clarify this market, in particular the provision of training, and to ensure that the quality of training provided was maintained either by more stringent supervision of training agencies or by imposing new obligations on those agencies, more particularly in the field of training information and publicity. This action took the tangible form of the law of 4 July 1990 on the supervision and quality of vocational training, one purpose of which was to lay the foundations for the consumer's right to training (see 4.1.66). The same law stated the principle that every person starting working life is entitled to a qualification, this right being exercised through what is known as *crédit-formation*.

3.1.24
The State, however, is not alone in the effort to clarify its actions. Twenty years after the introduction of the first inter-industry agreement on the subject of vocational training, the social partners have embarked upon the restructuring of the 'training convention'. A year's negotiation led to the signature of an agreement on 3 July 1991 on basic and advanced vocational training. This agreement is of considerable importance. First of all it is a major effort to clarify the regulations. Secondly, it clearly expresses the resolve of the two sides of industry to accept more responsibility in the field of vocational training, taking a part both in the creation of titles and diplomas and in funding part of the training. Finally, the agreement sets out a whole series of innovative measures, most of them creating new rights for the employee which may in the longer term influence working relationships and the basis for those relationships: the contract of employment.

3.1.25
A law adopted on 31 December 1991 incorporates the essential provisions of the agreement of 3 July 1991, with some adjustments. The two instruments have introduced the following changes:

— the levy on employers imposed to finance vocational training has risen from 1.2 % of the wage bill to 1.4 %, and this obligation has been extended to enterprises employing fewer than 10 people and to heads of enterprise at a lower rate of 0.15 %;

— creation of a new instrument for the integration of young people: *Contrat d'orientation* (see 3.2.50);

— legal recognition of the audit of personal and vocational skills, which is available to employees during special leave (see 3.3.23) or under the training plan;

— *dédit formation* clauses (undertaking by employee granted training leave to continue working for the employer for a certain period) and training outside working hours under the training plan are regulated (see 3.3.33).

3.1.26
A draft law to revitalise apprenticeship and develop alternance training as part of school education was tabled in Parliament in the spring of 1992. This draft law demonstrated the priority attached to alternance training as the route to the first level of recognised qualifications (see 3.2.39). This led to the law of 17 July 1992 on apprenticeship, which made it possible to adapt legislation on apprenticeship to fit in with the efforts to relaunch apprenticeship over the past few years and to upgrade its status. Employers' responsibilities were reinforced, and the status of apprentices improved.

3.1.27
At the end of 1993, the Government embarked on major reforms designed to make the vocational training system more effective under the five-year law of December 1993. The reforms had three objectives:

— upgrading of the initial and continuing training streams by a better balance of guidance, a revitalisation of apprenticeship, the reform of alternance contracts and more information for pupils on these measures;

— affirming the role of the regions as the forum for the formulation and coordination of policies on the initial and continuing training of young people;

— modernising and rationalising the organisation of the flows of funding for training (reduction in the number of fund-collecting bodies, optimisation of the flow of funds earmarked for alternance training, closer monitoring of training bodies and an improvement in the effectiveness and quality of training).

3.1.28
The implementation of some of the provisions of the five-year law called for negotiations with the social partners. A codicil to the national Inter-industry agreement of 3 July 1991 was signed by the social partners in July 1994 in response to the five-year law. The main objective was to amend a number of provisions on apprenticeship and vocational training and to provide for the restructuring of the fund-gathering network around a smaller number of collection bodies. This in turn has led to the creation of *Organismes paritaires collecteurs agréés* (OPCA – accredited joint collection bodies), taking over from the *Fonds d'assurance formation* (FAF – training insurance funds) and the *Associations de formation* (ASFO – training associations). The draft law on alternance and apprenticeship, which was to incorporate the provisions of the codicil, has been deferred.

3.1.29
The major reform of alternance training that has frequently been discussed and recommended, especially in the 1993 five-year law, has not yet taken place. The only reform was of the funding of apprenticeship, with a 1996 measure containing a

number of provisions designed to increase the financial resources for apprenticeship and distribute them better.

E) Conclusions on the historic development of the vocational training system

3.1.30
France has set up a system of continuing training which is comprehensive but relatively complex. It has been constructed outside the system of initial vocational education. Now that it has reached maturity the system may of course be improved, and recent reforms are attempting to do so. Even so, it seems that the challenge for the future of the continuing training system lies in whether it can complement and draw closer to initial training.

3.2 Initial vocational training

3.2.1
This section describes the forms of training for young people, whether they are still at school, students or have left the school system. This breakdown, however imperfect having regard to the French situation – where post-school training is included in the continuing training system – will nonetheless enable us to cover in a single section all the problems inherent in the integration of young people into working life.

Vocational training in the education system

3.2.2
Since the law on Education of December 1985, training can be acquired through three main channels:

— vocational education offers skills to pupils at French levels V and IV (see 3.2.4). In two years they can obtain a *Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle* (CAP) or a *Brevet d'études professionnelles* (BEP) and, in a four-year course, a *baccalauréat professionnel*. It confers a qualification in a given occupation;

— through technological education, young people can achieve level IV or III qualifications. These are *baccalauréats technologiques* at level IV and *diplômes universitaires de technologie* (DUT) and *brevets de techniciens supérieurs* (BTS) at level III. The latter diplomas are obtained in a two-year course following the *baccalauréat* (in this respect they belong to short-course higher education). Technological education offers a qualification not so much in a given trade as in a technology;

— finally, higher education, apart from the level III technological educational channels, offers job-related courses that are accessible in its first, second or third cycles.

It should also be pointed out that these routes are accessible through alternance training, more particularly apprenticeship. Alternance training and apprenticeship

give a young person the status of a wage-earner rather than a pupil or student, and involve the employer in the provision of training.

3.2.3
One of the main weaknesses of French vocational education is that it is less than an education system in the strict sense than a set of offshoots from the general education system that lead more or less directly to working life. What are known as *'classes d'orientation'*, in other words the foundation years in classes V, III and II (see diagram outlining the education system), at the end of which pupils who cannot pursue their studies in general education are directed towards vocational education, are regarded in practice as crucial stages, and it is common for the academic year to have to be repeated. The fact is that in France *'orientation'* – a general term to define the transition to vocational education – is in fact regarded as being for people unable to take the prestige path of academic education. Despite many reforms, the vocational streams are only slowly managing to create a more enlightened image of the education they provide.

A) Vocational education

3.2.4
Vocational education as we have defined it, in other words preparation for the CAP, BEP and *baccalauréat professionnel*, catered for 689 000 pupils in 1995, whereas general and technological education catered for over twice that figure, 1 500 000 (Education Ministry figures for 1995). The figures for vocational training have remained stable since the early 1990s.

The education is provided in *lycées professionnels* (LP – vocational *lycées*) which have taken over from the former *Collèges d'enseignement technique* (CET – technical education schools). In addition to these figures, however, there were 207 000 apprentices working for the same diplomas in apprentice training centres (3.2.45).

3.2.5
Vocational education includes preparation for the CAP and BEP. The *Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle* certifies skills related to the practice of a trade. The *Brevet d'études professionnelles* covers a broader vocational field (selling, health and social sector, etc.). CAP and BEP pupils are trained in production or service sector occupations.

3.2.6
In the early 1980s, these two diplomas did not enjoy a high status. The CAP was too specialised, as a result of a compartmentalised concept of work, and it did not really meet with employers' needs, whereas the BEP did not really fit in on the labour market. As a result, three measures were introduced to reform vocational education:

— the first consisted of restricting the number of pupils who, as early as in class V, were directed towards vocational and craft channels of education for which they had not themselves opted. This step took the form of setting up fourth- and fifth-year technological education so that pupils could be directed there after class III;

— the second was to overhaul the content of diplomas and to regroup some of them in different ways. This movement has led to a reduction in the number of CAPs;

— the purpose of the third measure was to ensure that the vocational training paths led to qualifications and were no longer perceived as a dead end. This gave rise in 1982 to the first *contrats d'adaptation* (adaptation contracts) for pupils who, following the BEP, return to technological education, and in 1987 to the *baccalauréat professionnel* (vocational baccalaureate).

3.2.7
Baccalauréats professionnels reflect the needs of employers for a workforce with level IV skills. Whereas most baccalaureates, including baccalaureates in technological subjects, pave the way to higher education, the vocational baccalaureate is intended to prepare people for employment. The vocational baccalaureate is prepared over a two-year period in a vocational lycée and is essentially designed for pupils in the shorter technical education cycle who hold a BEP. It has expanded considerably since its creation in 1985 and now accounts for about 156 000 pupils. The success of this new diploma is due in particular to three factors: it is part of alternance training, with 16 to 20 weeks over the two-year course being spent in a workplace; certain groups of subjects may be taken for the vocational baccalaureate only after a check has been made that there is a demand for those specialisms in the geographical catchment area of the school applying for those subjects; lastly, vocational baccalaureates must be recognised by the collective agreements for the trades for which they are a preparation.

3.2.8
According to research conducted by INSEE, the vocational baccalaureate rapidly leads to a lasting job. Five years after obtaining the diploma, unemployment among holders of the vocational baccalaureate is only 7.5 % (compared with the unemployment rate for young people leaving at level V in 1995, which is 32 % after five years).

3.2.9
The *baccalauréat professionnel* has, then, brought a breath of fresh air into vocational education, and this reform should be continued. Nevertheless, there is a fear that the rate of development for level V training will outrun the development of jobs. The future of level V diploma-holders is already less promising due to two factors: saturation in certain sectors, which are no longer able to absorb level V manpower (for example, CAPs in service-sector subjects offer few job outlets), and a raising of the level of skill demanded in jobs, the effect of which is to make the lowest level of qualification level IV or even level III rather than level V the standard for certain occupations.

B) Technological education

3.2.10
Under the heading of technological education (secondary and higher education), we include *baccalauréats technologiques* (technological baccalaureates) as well as

the short streams of higher education leading to the *Diplôme universitaire de technologie* (DUT – University diploma of technology) and the *Brevet de technicien supérieur* (BTS – advanced technician's diploma).

3.2.11
The *baccalauréat technologique* was introduced in the 1960s to replace the *brevet de technicien*. The twofold purpose was to supply trained people to the labour market and to train up advanced technicians. The surviving *brevets de technicien* are gradually being converted into technological or vocational baccalaureates. The technological baccalaureates break down into four major specialisms: industrial technologies, medico-social sciences, laboratory technologies and the service sector. In 1995, there were 134 498 passes in technological baccalaureates, more than half of them in the service sector sections (by way of comparison, 281 004 general baccalaureates and 63 797 vocational baccalaureates were issued in the same year – see Table 3.3.23).

3.2.12
Technological baccalaureates have not really achieved their aims, since only one quarter of their holders find permanent work immediately, the others topping up their training by going on to higher education, including university. This finding has meant that teachers have concentrated on preparing their pupils for higher education rather than for a trade. The development in technological baccalaureates is part of the reason for the creation of the vocational baccalaureates, which are resolutely geared to the working world.

3.2.13
The moderate success of technological baccalaureates contrasts with the success encountered by the two shorter cycles of higher education, i.e. the *Sections de techniciens supérieurs* and the *Instituts universitaires de technologie*.

3.2.14
The higher technician sections were introduced in 1964. The number of pupils rapidly increased from 68 000 in 1980 to 200 000 in 1991 and to 230 000 in 1995 (31 % of them in the private sector). The BTS (*Brevet de technicien supérieur*) offers specialist subjects in four sectors: industry, the service sector, health and paramedical, and applied arts. The major role of the private sector is due to the success of this training path. Depending on the region and specialist subjects, there are between 5 and 20 applications for each place offered in the public sector. According to INSEE, only 7.1 % of holders of the BTS are unemployed five years after completing their studies. Integration into work is better in the industrial than in the service sector, where certain BTS specialisms come up against competition from DUTs (*Diplômes universitaires de technologie*).

3.2.15
On their introduction in 1966, DUTs were intended gradually to replace the BTS. In practice, however, the two channels have developed along parallel lines. IUTs (*Instituts universitaires de technologie*) cater for more than 50 000 young people every year. To illustrate the attraction of this path, it should be pointed out that in 1995 it accounted for 15 % of admissions to university. These figures bear witness to two factors: the success of the training both in terms of content and finding a job, and the shortage of facilities available. Due to the pressure of demand from

employers, establishments have set up a third year of studies to meet employers' needs for special types of job or specific duties.

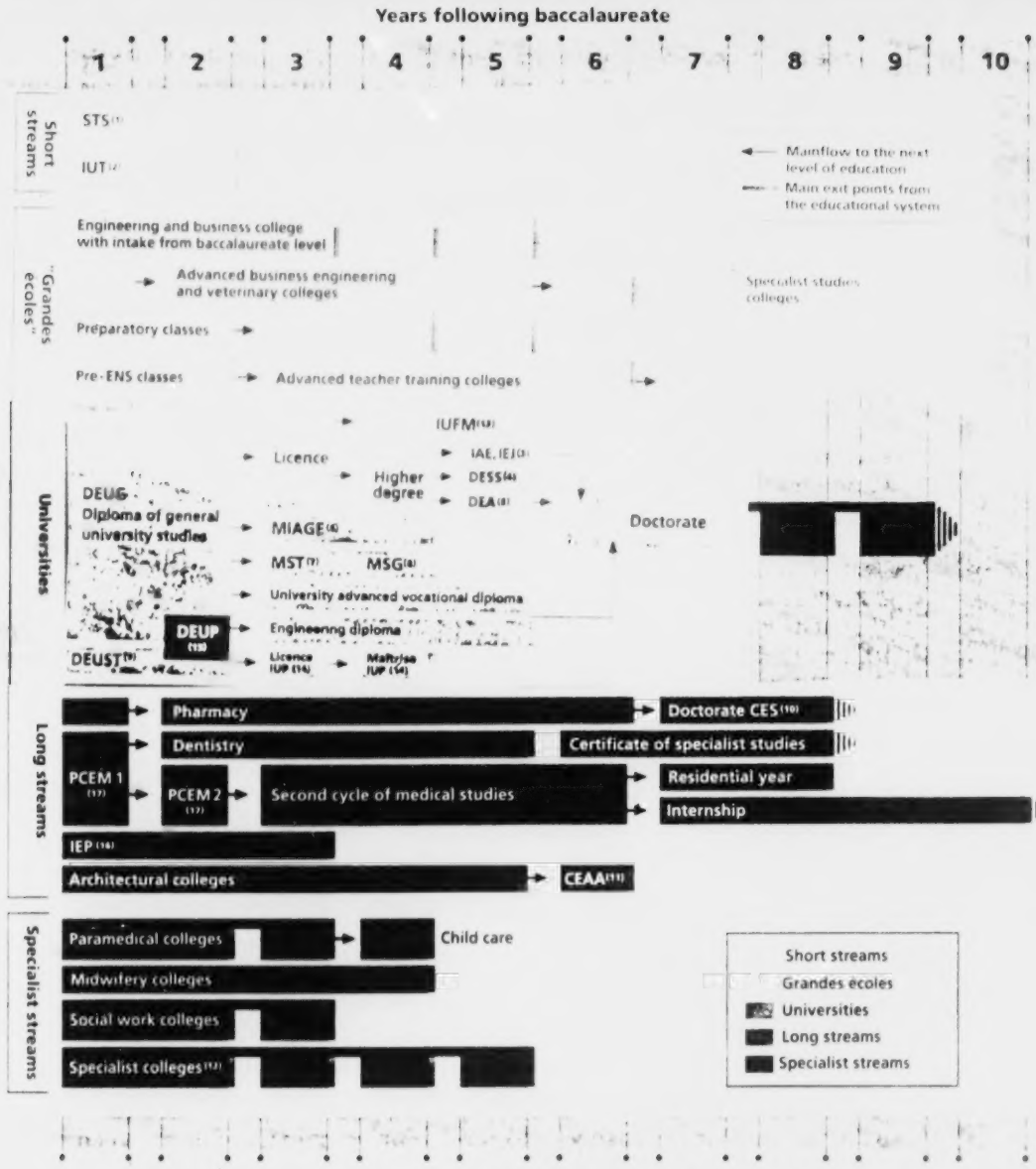
3.2.16
The general quality of training provided by these short-stream courses, and employers' recognition of their quality as demonstrated by the figures for diploma-holders finding work, have encouraged the authorities to try to change the flow of pupils after the *baccalauréat*. The aim is to direct towards a BTS or DUT those pupils who up to the present have gone on to the first cycle of general academic education at university.

3.2.17
The problems raised by technological education are thus essentially problems of guidance and financial resources.

C) Relating higher education more directly to jobs

3.2.18
In 1995 2.1 million students were in higher education, compared with 1.2 million in 1980. There has been a continuous increase in the numbers in higher education. To meet this challenge, in 1990 the '*Plan Université 2000*' was launched, with a view to re-drawing and fleshing out the university map. In parallel with these quantitative problems, however, the Ministry has initiated a reform of general education paths, their organisation and content, to combat student failure in the first university cycles. Apart from redirecting students towards short courses, the stress has been on the need to relate higher education more closely to jobs.

Figure 9. **Higher education in France**



1) STS: Advanced technicians' section.
2) IUT: University institute of technology.
3) Specialist institutes:
IAE: Institute of business administration
IEJ: Institute of legal studies
4) DESS: Diploma of avanced specialist studies.
5) DEA: Diploma of advanced studies.
6) MIAGE: Degree in computer studies applied to management science.
7) MST: Degree in science and technology.
8) MSG: Degree in studies.
9) DEUST: Diploma in scientific and technical university studies.
10) CES: Certificate of advanced studies.
11) CEAA: Certificate of advanced studies.
12) Specialist colleges: comunications, computer technology, tourism, etc.
13) IUFM: University institute for the traning of teachers.
14) IUP: University institute of vocational studies.
15) DEUP: Diploma of vocational university studies.
16) IEP: Institute of political studies.
17) PCEM 1: First cycle of medical studies.

SOURCE ***MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION, EDUCATION ACCOUNTS 1991 - 1994***

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3.2.19
The 'vocationalisation' of higher education began in the 1970s. *Maîtrises de sciences et techniques* (MST), *Maîtrises de sciences de gestion* (MSG) and *Maîtrises de méthodes informatiques appliquées à la gestion* (MIAGE) (higher diplomas in science and technology, in management science and information technology applied to management) are paths to high-level studies. The students who are admitted, following stringent selection procedures, tackle theory and application. They have longer study hours, more intensive teaching than in conventional streams, compulsory job placements and close relations with employers. The creation of the DESS, a one-year course preparing young people holding a *Maîtrise* for working life through research, and *Magistères*, diplomas designed to compete with the diplomas offered by the *grandes écoles*, have made the third cycles more relevant to the working world. In 1984, the creation of *Diplômes d'études universitaires scientifiques et techniques* (DEUST – diplomas of scientific and technical studies) reflected the aim of relating the first university cycle more closely to working life. These highly specialised forms of training have found a place between the IUT and the BTS.

3.2.20
In addition to making its education more relevant to the working world, higher education is trying to meet the needs of employers by developing continuing training. Two major reforms are planned with this in mind.

3.2.21
The first, dating back to 1989, is the introduction of new engineering training streams which have three main features: the predominance of continuing training; their target group, i.e. advanced technicians; and partnership between employers and institutes of higher education. The aim is to train more engineers.

3.2.22
The second ambitious reform, dating back to July 1992, is the concept of validation and the embodiment in a diploma of prior learning when issuing all higher education diplomas. This means that all routes at all levels of higher education will have to set up procedures for the recognition and validation of prior learning, not just for receiving adults at university but also for passing exams.

3.2.23
These two reforms reflect the resolve to reduce the relative status of diplomas acquired in initial training in the careers of French workers. With so many more opportunities to go back to study and obtain recognition of their working experience, young people should have an incentive to embark on occupational or job-related streams of education, and then, if they wish to, return later to their training route. The challenge is to combat university failure (it has been estimated that almost 20 % of students enrolled for the first year of university drop out). Relating education to the working world, the opening-up of channels of education to continuing training and the redeployment of resources towards shorter courses of education are the three lines along which developments are moving in higher education.

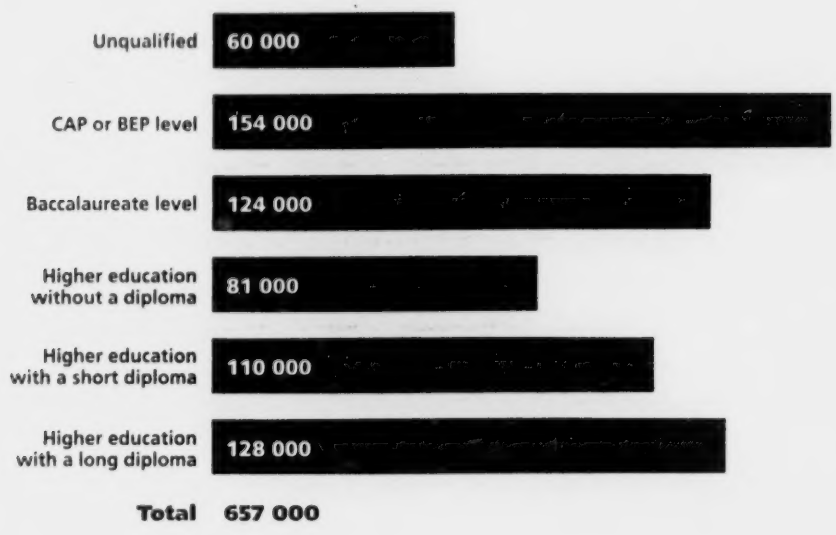
Table 5. **Diplomas of those leaving the education system**

Secondary education	**1991**	**1995**
Brevet (metropolitan France)	542 741	590 000
Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle (CAP)	273 933	240 800
Brevet d'études professionnelles (BEP)	162 553	178 119
Supplementary mentions (MC)	9 526	10 523
Brevet professionnel (BP)	13 367	13 679
Brevet de technicien (BT)	8 392	3 882
General baccalaureate	**266 311**	**281 004**
Series L (literary)	70 006	69 490
Series ES (economics and social)	64 976	74 961
Series S (scientific)	131 329	136 553
Technological baccalaureate	**113 993**	**134 498**
Series STI (industrial)		34 429
Series STL (laboratory technologies)		4 802
Series SMS (socio-medical sciences)		12 969
Series STT (tertiary technical sciences)		76 373
Hotel trades		2 269
Miscellaneous		3 656
Vocational baccalaureate	**24 602**	**63 797**

Higher education	**1990**	**1995**
Brevet de technicien supérieur (BTS)	52 833	76 504
Diplôme universitaire de technologie (DUT)	27 835	35 819
First cycle diploma (DEUG and DEUST)	88 446	124 532
Licence	71 325	116 246
Maîtrise de sciences et techniques	51 169	74 557
DESS and DEA	33 717	46 077
Doctorate	7 652	9 223
Medical diploma (health)	8 797	8 100
Engineering diploma	16 080	21 851

SOURCE: *MINISTRY OF EDUCATION*

Figure 10. **Numbers leaving the education system in 1995**



SOURCE **MINISTRY OF EDUCATION.**

D) Agricultural education

3.2.24
Agricultural vocational education occupies a separate place in the French education system. Right from the start (1848) it came under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture. It still does so today, although there have been efforts to harmonise it with the Education Ministry.

3.2.25
Modern agricultural vocational education is based on the law of 2 August 1960, which makes a distinction between three cycles of education:

— education directed towards agriculture (*brevet d'apprentissage agricole* and *brevet professionnel agricole*), preparing farmers for their occupation;

— more specialised vocational training following compulsory education (*brevet professionnel agricole*);

— technical education to train technical agents, technicians and advanced technicians (*brevet de technicien agricole, brevet de technicien supérieur agricole*).

3.2.26
The education is provided in agricultural *collèges* or *lycées*, to which pupils go when they leave class V. At the same time, agricultural higher education provides training for specialist engineers, horticultural engineers, engineers in the agricultural and food industries, engineers in agronomy and veterinary surgeons.

3.2.27
In 1968 the three cycles were regrouped as one short and one long cycle. The short cycle leads to the *Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle agricole* (CAPA – certificate of agricultural vocational aptitude) in the three years following school up to class V, or the *Brevet d'études professionnelles agricoles* (BEPA – diploma in vocational agricultural studies) in two years after class III. The long cycle, following class II, leads in two years to the *Brevet de technicien agricole à options* (BTAO – agricultural technician's diploma with options). The BEPA is the minimum diploma required in order to run a farm business and, for that reason, it receives State aid (without additional training). Since 1976 it has been possible to prepare for the CAPA on an apprenticeship.

3.2.28
In 1982 a debate was launched on a radical reform of agricultural education, which was to lead to the laws of 1984. The first of these laws, adopted in July, reformed public-sector agricultural education. The second, passed in December of the same year, reformed the relations between the State and private agricultural education establishments. The two laws defined agricultural education as a specific component of the public-sector education and training service, to which private establishments could contribute under contract. The Ministry of Agriculture retained its supervisory powers, but the law set out the arrangements to harmonise its efforts with the education provided by the Ministry of Education. In the years that followed, this reform was followed up by a reorganisation of agricultural diplomas.

Table 6. Numbers in agricultural education from 1980 to 1995

	1980	1988	1995
Technicien supérieur	6 022	12 506	20 145
BT and Bac	31 081	36 520	48 761
CAP and BEP	85 994	89 152	83 885
Total	123 097	138 178	152 791

SOURCE **MINISTRY OF EDUCATION - DEP 1995**

3.2.29
Agricultural education is facing several challenges. In the first place it needs to develop training levels IV and III. With effect from 1 January 1992, level IV vocational training was the first level required for running a farm. It must also take into account the sweeping changes taking place in agriculture and reflect the trades that exist in the agri-food industry, biotechnology and environment. Presented as a priority in the agriculture budget, agricultural education will call for substantial resources in order to meet these two challenges at a time when agriculture is steadily declining in terms of the number of jobs it provides.

Initial integration training

3.2.30
Under this heading come apprenticeship and training measures for the 16–25 year olds. Apprenticeship comes outside both the initial training system and the continuing training system and is a specific vocational training path. Training measures for the 16–25 year olds, however, have been structured around the general continuing training system since 1983 due to the initiative of the social partners.

Introduction of training measures

3.2.31
The first step taken by the authorities to counteract youth unemployment was in 1975, when 50 000 training courses (known as 'Granet' courses after the name of the then minister) were to pave the way for the integration of young people into the working world. It was not until 1977, however, that the first general measure was introduced, in the form of a *Pacte pour l'emploi*. Originally designed as a short-term measure, in fact it was extended twice and, after the change of government in 1981, it was extended by a *Plan avenir jeunes*. In content, these *Pactes* were based on four measures:

— exemption from social security contributions (for employers recruiting young people under employment or apprenticeship contracts);

— practical job placements with companies;

— vocational training placements;

— contracts of employment combining work and training;

Over a five-year period, the various *Pactes* benefited over two million young people.

3.2.32
Subsequently, the authorities added what were known as *activités d'intérêt général* (activities of general interest) to these four measures. Between 1985 and 1989, over 300 000 young people took advantage of the *travail d'utilité collective* scheme (TUC – community service projects). These schemes were later replaced by *contrats emploi-solidarité (employment-solidarity contracts)* (see 3.2.75).

3.2.33
In 1989, with the introduction of the *credit-formation* (training entitlement), an attempt was made to give purpose – the acquisition of a qualification – and coherence to all the measures directed towards young people (see 3.2.69). The agreement of 3 July 1991 and the law of 31 December 1991 also replaced certain placement arrangements by contracts of employment.

Despite the changes of government since 1993, policy on youth employment has not radically altered. Parallel to the large scale use of the *Contrat emploi-solidarité* (see 3.2.75), financial incentives for employers are to be increased with the introduction of bonuses for recruitment under alternance training under a contract of employment (apprenticeship, *Contrat de qualification, Contrat d'adaptation*) and a new subsidy, *Aide au premier emploi des jeunes* (APEJ – aid for young persons' first jobs), which was, however, withdrawn in 1996. Overall, there has been reasonable continuity in youth employment policy, especially since 1985.

3.2.34
The 1993 five-year law transferred the government's responsibility for organising measures to upgrade the training of 16–25-year-olds to the regional councils as from July 1994. Following the five-year period, the whole of continuing training for young people, including pre-qualifying training, will be transferred to the regions.

3.2.35
While the various measures have not reduced youth unemployment, they have halted its rise. The under-25 workforce is the one that is most vulnerable to changes in the economic situation. Following a period when it became worse between 1990 and 1994, there was a slight drop in youth unemployment in 1995 and 1996. The youth unemployment rate in France (23.9 % in 1996) is still one of the highest in the European Union.

3.2.36
As of 1 July 1997, the measures for the integration and vocational training of young people were as follows:

— apprenticeship (see 3.2.37 to 3.2.48)

— alternance training under a contract of employment (*Contrat d'orientation, Contrat de qualification, Contrat d'adaptation*) (see 3.2.49 to 3.2.68);

— alternance training measures for young people (see 3.2.69 to 3.2.74);

— the *Contrat emploi-solidarité* (see 32.2.75 to 3.2.78).

Current measures

A. Apprenticeship (see review, 3.2.79)

3.2.37
Apprenticeship is served under a contract of employment concluded between an apprentice and an accredited employer. It includes training provided by both the employer and an apprentice training centre. It is funded by the apprenticeship levy paid by employers, the State and the regional councils.

3.2.38
The funding of apprenticeship was reformed by a law of May 1996. This has laid the foundation for renewed improvements to the volume and quality of apprenticeship. It was based on a resolve to clarify and simplify the system, and to ensure a fair and balanced distribution of the funds for the development of apprenticeship. A unified

system of premiums for the recruitment and training of apprentices has been established. Apprenticeship, moreover, is likely to become a training path in its own right, leading to diplomas at an equivalent level to those marking successful conclusion of the traditional secondary and higher cycles of education.

1) The apprenticeship contract

3.2.39
The apprenticeship contract is a special type of contract of employment, the legal arrangements for which are laid down in the Labour Code (Articles L 117-1 *et seq.*). Its purpose is to provide general, theoretical and practical training so that the young person can obtain a vocational qualification validated by a diploma or an accreditation. The contract must be made in writing and lodged with the Directorate of Labour, Employment and Vocational Training for the *département*.

3.2.40
Before employers can conclude a contract of apprenticeship, they must be accredited as apprentice masters by the prefect of the *département*. The normal duration of a contract is between one and three years (75 % of apprenticeship contracts signed are for a term of one to two years). It may differ depending on the profession and the qualifications of the young person.

3.2.41
During the period of the contract, the apprentice is an employee and is therefore entitled to the protection of labour legislation, like with any other employee. He is entitled to a minimum wage, which is set as a percentage of the national minimum wage (SMIC) and which varies according to age and the stage of the contract. The scale is as follows:

Age	First year	Second year	Third year
16–17	25 %	37 %	53 %
18–20	41 %	49 %	65 %
21 and over	53 %	61 %	78 %

These earnings are gross (in other words, they are before deduction of social security contributions), so that an apprentice's net wage is lower.

3.2.42
After the two-month trial period, an apprenticeship contact can be ended only by mutual agreement or a decision by the *Conseil de Prud'hommes* (labour tribunal) in the event of a serious misdemeanour, one of the parties' repeated failure to comply with its obligations or the apprentice's unsuitability.

2) Training

3.2.43
Training takes place both in the workplace and in a *Centre de formation des apprentis* (CFA – apprentice training centre). The employer is required to provide

practical training, entrusting the apprentice with tasks or putting him in workstations where he can perform operations or do jobs that are in line with an annual progression of work decided by common agreement with the CFA. Some of the practical training, however, may take place in another workplace by agreement between the employer and the host workplace. At work, the young person works under the supervision of an apprentice master, whose terms of reference are to help the apprentice acquire the skills needed for the qualification aimed at.

3.2.44
The employer is required to enrol the young person in an apprentice training centre providing instruction that corresponds to the training specified in that contract. Apprentice training centres are establishments set up by a convention between a regional council or the body running the CFA (these centres do not have their own legal personality) or with the State. This may be a local authority, a trade union, a chamber of commerce, an enterprise, a public or private educational establishment or any other natural or legal person. These centres are subject to the educational supervision of the State (Ministry of Education) and the technical and financial supervision of the State or the region that has signed the convention.

3.2.45
The training provided by the training centre may not be less than an average of 400 hours a year. If the qualification for which the apprentice is studying is at level IV *(Bac professionnel)* or III (BTS), the total length of training may not be less than 1 500 hours.

Since the introduction of the law of 23 July 1987, it has been possible to prepare through apprenticeship for higher diplomas at level V (up to that date, the training was solely for CAPs or BEPs). In 1996, higher diplomas at level V accounted for 17 % of all diplomas prepared through apprenticeship. The apprentice training centre may delegate all or part of the training to a public- or private-sector establishment, provided that the latter is under contract to the State. It may also delegate part of the technological and practical instruction that it normally provides to another enterprise. This sub-contracting assumes that the enterprise has been validated by inspection of the apprenticeship. The employer is under an obligation to enrol the young person to take examinations, and the latter is under an obligation to sit them.

3) The funding of apprenticeship

3.2.46
There are two main sources of funding for apprenticeship: the apprenticeship levy and the regional apprenticeship fund. In practice, the proceeds from the apprenticeship levy help to fund preliminary technological training, not just apprenticeship.

3.2.47
The apprenticeship levy is payable by all employers engaged in industrial, commercial or craft activities (in other words the professions and agricultural enterprises are exempted). It is equivalent to 0.5 % of the employer's annual gross wage bill.

3.2.48
Each regional council administers its own regional apprenticeship fund, which receives funds out of sources transferred from the State and out of appropriations allocated by the regional council from its own resources. The regional apprenticeship fund is the financial tool used by regions to implement their apprenticeship policy. For example, the regional council may draw up an outline budget for apprenticeship, defining the forms of training and the apprenticeship training centres that will be granted funds.

B. Alternance training (see review, 3.2.83)

3.2.49
Under the agreement of 26 October 1983, the social partners created three alternance training measures: the *stage d'initiation à la vie professionnelle (SIVP)* (placement for introduction to working life), the *contrat de qualification* (vocational qualification contract) and the *contrat d'adaptation* (adaptation contract). These measures were introduced on a general scale by the law of 24 February 1984. The national inter-industry agreement of 3 July 1991 and the law of 31 December 1991 replaced the *stage d'initiation à la vie professionnelle* with the *contrat d'orientation* and made a few changes to the content and practical procedures of other contracts.

1) The contracts

a) The *contrat d'orientation* (guidance contract)

3.2.50
This contract is aimed at young people aged 22 and over who do not hold a diploma of technological or vocational education, and who have not completed their second cycle of general education. The contract has been extended to young people aged under 26 in 1994. This contract should help young people to find their footing in working life by promoting vocational guidance through practical experience in the workplace.

3.2.51
The *contrat d'orientation* is a special type of contract of employment for a period of three to six months. It is non-renewable, and may not be offered as an alternative to temporary or permanent jobs within an enterprise. It includes guidance and training provided during working hours in training agencies. These actions may take the form of skills audits and help with building up knowledge that will enable young people to draw up a career plan. The measure may not be for less than 52 hours over the first three months and 104 hours over the next three months.

3.2.52
During the contract, the young person is an employee, receiving a wage of 30 % of the national minimum in the case of young people aged 16–17, 50 % in the 18–20 age group and 65 % in the case of those aged 21 and over. The employer is exempted from its social security contributions. The young person may terminate the guidance contract at any time to take up a job or to go on a course that leads to a qualification.

b) The *contrat de qualification* (qualification contract)

3.2.53
The qualification contract is for young people aged under 26 who hope to supplement their initial training by job-related training, either because they do not have a recognised qualification or because the qualification they do have does not offer access to the jobs on offer.

In order to sign a qualification contract, employers must be accredited by the authorities, i.e. the *Direction départementale du travail, de l'emploi et de la formation professionnelle* (*département*-level directorate of labour, employment and vocational training). This accreditation is obtained after lodging an application giving a copy of the training convention, a report on the consultation of employee representatives and a statement of the number of young people who may be taken on and the tutors' qualifications.

3.2.54
The qualification contract is a special kind of contract of employment for a period of 6 to 24 months. The employer undertakes to provide a job to the young person during the term of the contract as well as training that will help him/her to acquire vocational training validated by a title or diploma of technological education, recognised by a collective agreement or as defined by the employer/union committee for employment in that particular branch of industry.

3.2.55
General, vocational and technological instruction imparted during the period of the contract must take up at least 25 % of the total duration of the contract. This instruction is covered by a convention with a training agency (which implies that the training takes up 25 % of the time and is outside the workplace). Training takes place during working hours and must not result in the young person having to work longer than the normal hours of work in the workplace.

3.2.56
Throughout the period of the contract, the young person is a wage-earner and entitled to all rights conferred by laws, regulations or conventions on young wage-earners, to the extent that they are compatible with his status as young trainee. His remuneration is a percentage of the national minimum wage, based on the following scale:

Age	First year	Second year
16–17	30 %	45 %
18–20	50 %	60 %
21 and over	65 %	75 %

The employer is exempted from payment of social security contributions on the trainee's wages.

c) The *contrat d'adaptation* (adaptation contract)

3.2.57
The adaptation contract, which is for a definite or indefinite period, is reached between an employer and a young person aged under 26. The aim is to provide the young person with training that will help him to adapt to a job or a type of job. If the contract is for a definite period, it must be for a term of between six months and a year; if it is for an indefinite period, the adaptation period is for over one year.

3.2.58
The training provided is alternance training and combines general, vocational and technological instruction given by training agencies, together with the acquisition of vocational skills through engaging in one or more vocational activities within a workplace. The general, vocational or technological subjects are taught during working hours and outside the workplace. Under this contract, training must be for a period of 200 hours, unless a longer period is allowed by the alternance-accredited collection agency (see 3.2.67).

3.2.59
Throughout the period of the contract, or the adaptation period if the contract is for an indefinite term, the young person is a wage-earner and enjoys all the benefits granted by law, regulation or agreement to other wage-earners to the extent that they are compatible with his status as a young trainee. He receives remuneration of no less than 80 % of the wage laid down by the collective agreement, which must itself be no less than the national guaranteed minimum wage (SMIC). There is no exemption from social security contributions on this remuneration.

2) *Tutorat* (mentoring)

3.2.60
The national inter-industry agreement of 3 July 1991 laid down the conditions for taking on young people in the workplace. In particular, it covered the provision of information to employee representatives and the appointment of a 'mentor'.

3.2.61
The mentor is chosen by the employer, on a voluntary basis, from among the qualified employees within the enterprise, with due regard for his level of qualification, which must be at least the same as that of the young person. In small concerns, the mentor may be the employer himself.

3.2.62
The mentor monitors the work of at most three young people, irrespective of their contracts (which may include apprenticeship). His terms of reference are to welcome, help, inform and guide young people during their time in the workplace and ensure that their time is properly employed. Under the conditions laid down by the contract, he provides liaison between the employees in the workplace who are involved in the young person's acquisition of job skills and the training agency. The employer must allow the mentor the time he needs to perform his duties. The mentor is prepared for mentoring and if necessary receives specific training.

3) The funding of alternance training

3.2.63
All workplaces must spend the 0.1 % supplementary levy (which is in addition to the apprenticeship levy) on training or pay it over to the Treasury, and all enterprises with a workforce of 10 or more must use or pay to the Treasury 0.4 % of their annual wage bill to finance alternance training.

a) The direct use of the 0.1 % and 0.4 % levies

3.2.64
All employers accepting young people under an alternance training measure may deduct fixed amounts per training hour from the two levies intended to finance that training, for young people taken on under a *contrat d'orientation*, *contrat d'adaptation* or a *contrat de qualification*. In view of the lengthy period of training, such direct use of their levies is of benefit only to large concerns having sizeable levies to pay. In the case of other concerns – and small and medium-sided firms are those which have most often resorted to alternance training – it is more to their advantage to avail themselves of the 'mutualisation' arrangement by making payments to an accredited collection agency.

b) Payment to an *Organisme mutualisateur agréé* (accredited mutual funding agency)

3.2.65
Having taken over from the former *Fonds d'assurance formation* (FAF – training insurance funds) and *Associations de formation* (ASFO – training associations) following the reform of training fund collection agencies, *organismes paritaires collecteurs agréés* (OPCA) are accredited collection bodies set up by a collective agreement to administer the money that employers have to devote to the funding of vocational training. Their creation and operation are regulated and supervised by the authorities (see 3.1.18).

3.2.66
There are at present over 60 OPCAs empowered to receive alternance funds. They collect the levies payable by employers operating within their field of competence. They pool the amounts received and disburse them to:

— inform employers and young people about the three measures;

— reimburse employers who resort to one of the three alternance arrangements. The amounts reimbursed are FRF 50 per hour's training in the case of *contrats d'orientation* and *contrats d'adaptation*, and FRF 60 per training hour for *contrats de qualification*. These refunds are at a fixed rate; in other words, they apply irrespective the amounts actually incurred by the employer for the training of young people. The mutual funding agency may adjust the amount for which responsibility is taken under *contrat de qualification*.

— pay for the work of training mentors, who may be employees or, where the workforce is less than 10, heads of enterprise;

— offset overheads.

3.2.67
Through this mutual funding, employers having fairly low levies to pay can have recourse to alternance training measures, in particular the *contrat de qualification*, for which they usually obtain refunds in excess of actual disbursements. This system of funding alternance training met with difficulties due to massive recourse to the three measures in 1986 and 1987, and so the social partners set up Agefal (*Association pour la gestion des fonds des formations en alternance* – Association for the management of alternance training funds) which, at the national level, has the task of establishing the necessary transfers between OMAs in surplus and those in deficit.

c) Payment to the Treasury

3.2.68
Employers not availing themselves of one of the two options for spending the 0.1 % supplementary levy and the 0.3 % 'youth' levy must pay the amounts over to the State. The 0.4 % levy must be paid by 15 September of the current year at the latest. It is based on the wage bill for the previous year, adjusted for the current year. The 0.1 % supplementary levy is paid to the Treasury with the apprenticeship levy, in other words on 5 April of the following year.

C. Alternance training measures for young people (see review, 3.2.84)

3.2.69
Alternance training measures for the 16–26 age group were implemented under the individualised training credit measure. Young people benefiting from these qualification or pre-qualification measures are jobseekers in work placements undergoing vocational training and are paid out of the unemployment insurance system or by the State.

Training credit was originally a principle for the organisation of measures to help young people leaving school without qualifications. Since the law of 4 July 1990, training credit has been defined by the Labour Code as a means whereby any worker may exercise the right to a qualification; this means that training credit is accessible to wage-earners and adults without a qualification.

3.2.70
The implementation of *crédit-formation individualisé pour les jeunes* dates back to 1989. The designation chosen, 'personalised training entitlement for young people', summarises the principles underlying its conception: the right of all young people without skills to access a personalised training itinerary leading to a level V qualification. *Credit-formation* reflects three ambitions:

— to give young people skills;

— to encourage training agencies to individualise their training;

— to set up an administrative organisation capable of coordinating the measure.

The individualisation of training itineraries and content was the core concept. Several measures were mobilised to offer young people access to a given qualification. Training credit was less a measure in itself than an overall set of arrangements designed to help young people acquire a qualification through existing structures and measures.

3.2.71
Under the five-year law of 20 December 1993, the region continues to be the level at which policies are on the vocational training of 16–25 year olds is framed. Some of the alternance training initiatives (initiatives to provide qualifications) were transferred to the regions in 1994.

3.2.72
The purpose of alternance training actions is to enable jobseekers under 26 to access training leading to a level V vocational qualification (CAP, BEP). They are targeted at young people having no career plan, those whose plan is out of line with the job opportunities or those who do not have the skills to embark directly on carrying out their plan.

3.2.73
The actions aim to mobilise efforts based on a plan or a pre-qualification combining the fundamentals of general subjects with an introduction to occupational techniques in a family of trades.

3.2.74
Training actions can be modularised. The duration may vary depending on the training time that each young person requires to obtain a recognised level V vocational qualification.

D. The *contrat emploi-solidarité* (CES – employment-solidarity contract) (see review, 3.2.85)

3.2.75
This contract, which was set up in 1990, replaced the *travaux d'utilité collective* (TUC – community service projects – see 3.2.33). It is directed towards young people aged 18 to 26 encountering the most difficulties, particularly those having a level V qualification, but also to the long-term unemployed aged over 50, those receiving the minimum integration income and people who have been registered as unemployed for over three years. In 1995, the arrangements were retargeted towards 'priority' groups.

3.2.76
The objective is to help people who find it particularly hard to obtain work to engage in a part-time activity under a contract of part-time employment. That activity must meet community needs not being met elsewhere, which means that such a contract is not a measure leading to qualifications.

3.2.77
These contracts may be granted only by local authorities, public establishments, non-profitmaking associations and foundations.

3.2.78
The contract is for 3 to 12 months, or in exceptional cases 24 months. The working week is 20 hours, and the pay is equal to the minimum wage (SMIC), disbursed by the employer agency. The State refunds 65–85 % of the remuneration, which is also exempted from social security contributions and tax. During the contract, training may be arranged for the young person working part-time during the period in which he is off work. The young person is entitled not to remuneration but to a State grant of FRF 22 (approx. ECU 3) per hour up to a maximum of 400 hours (the average duration being 200 hours).

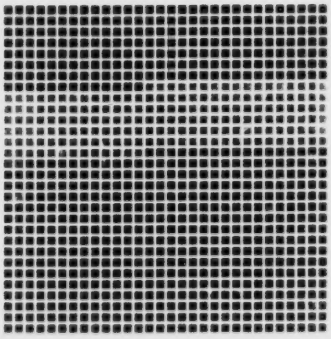
A review of measures for the integration of young people

1) Apprenticeship

3.2.79
The number of young people entering apprenticeship declined in the early 1980s, but started to rise again from 1986 on. Since the early 1990s, under measures to develop and promote apprenticeship, approximately 200 000 contracts have been signed each year. A total of 300 000 young people were preparing for a diploma during their apprenticeship at the end of 1995. Apprenticeship is still on the whole for young men rather than women (72 %).

3.2.80
Industry has been a steadily rising user of apprenticeship, but the service sector is still the main sector making use of apprenticeship (retailing, services to enterprises, services to individuals).

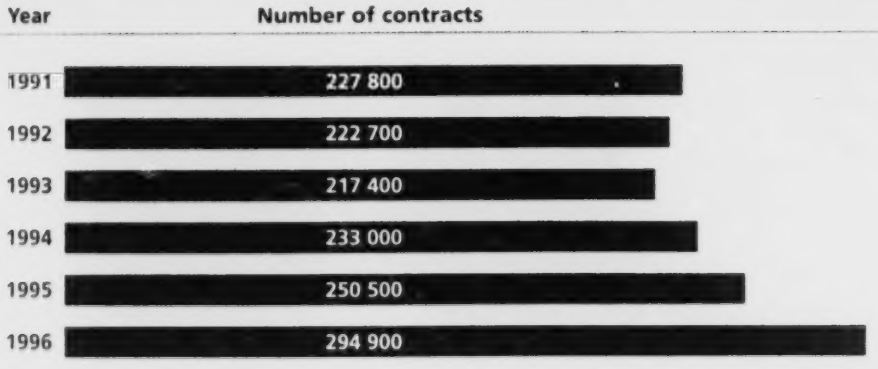
Figure 11. Breakdown of apprenticeship contracts by economic sector (1995)



Agriculture, forestry, fisheries	2.5 %
Industry	22.3 %
Building	20 %
Service	55.2 %
TOTAL	**100 %**

SOURCE: CIRCÉ.

Figure 12. Number of apprenticeship contracts (1991–96)



SOURCE: CIRCÉ.

3.2.81
Since the reform of apprenticeship in 1993, there has been a rise in the number of apprentices over 17 as the level of education of the recruits has improved. This trend is due to the gradual broadening of apprenticeship to include all levels of the technological education diploma, especially those at a level higher than the baccalaureate. The opportunity has been available since 1987, but there was a considerable development from 1993 on. Training leading to a level II to IV diploma is today being taken by 17 % of new apprentices. The relative decline in training leading to the CAP and BEP (level V) has continued, and now caters for 83 % of apprentices compared with 91 % in 1992.

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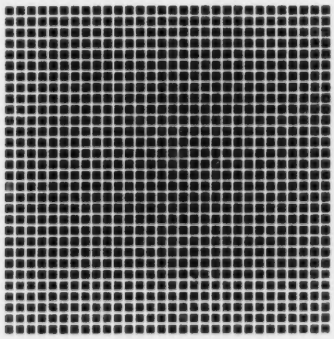
Figure 13. **Breakdown of apprentices by level of diploma (1995)**



Level V (CAP, Brevet Professionnel, BEP)	**83.2 %**
Level IV (Bac professionnel)	**11.6 %**
Levels II and III	**5.1 %**
TOTAL	**100 %**

SOURCE **CIRCÉ**

3.2.82
There has been a steady increase in apprenticeship since 1993 despite the slowdown in the economy. The aim of the social partners and the Government in relaunching apprenticeship and its extension to the public sector has been to double the number of apprentices.

2) Alternance training

Table 7. **Trends in the number of contracts (1990–94)**

Year	SIVP and CO	CA	CQ	Total
1990	20 000	85 000	130 500	235 500
1991	12 800	72 700	141 900	227 400
1992	1 700	58 600	141 200	201 500
1993	4 377	44 000	133 000	181 377
1994	6 500	45 000	137 000	188 500

SIVP: *stage d'initiation à la vie professionnelle*, replaced by the *contrat d'orientation* (CO);
CA: *contrat d'adaptation*;
CQ: *contrat de qualification*.

SOURCE **MINISTRY OF LABOUR**

3.2.83
Over the years of practical experience of alternance training, the *contrat de qualification* has proved itself as a genuine training measure, whereas the *contrat d'adaptation* has usually been just an aid for recruitment. The age and level of training of young people recruited under an alternance contract of integration have

risen steadily. Young people with education and training of baccalaureate or a higher level accounted for more than half of the holders of new qualification contracts in 1995. Over the past few years, there has been a marked decline in the numbers taking up adaptation contracts.

3) Alternance training measures

3.2.84
There were approximately 189 400 enrolments for alternance training in 1995, with the regions taking responsibility for about 110 600 of these, i.e. 58 % of the total. The measure caters for an ever increasing number of young people at or above level IV, who accounted for about 13.5 % of those entering alternance training in 1995. Another striking feature is that the group catered for under this measure is also getting younger: there has been an increase in the proportion of 16- and 17-year-olds, and a drop in the percentage of over-21s.

4) The *contrat emploi-solidarité* (employment-solidarity contract)

3.2.85
In 1995, 445 000 people had contracts under this scheme. Employers in the non-commercial sector of the economy (mainly associations and public establishments) signed 700 000 CESs. The CES is directed at an increasingly young target group with a steadily rising standard of education.

Vocational guidance for young people

3.2.86
Young people have access to vocational guidance services within the school environment or in agencies outside national education system.

A) Vocational guidance in the school

3.2.87
Guidance is provided in the school environment via the *Office national d'information sur les enseignements et les professions* (Onisep) and *Centres d'information et d'orientation* (CIO).

3.2.88
Onisep is a public sector establishment that comes under the Ministry of Education. This national information board produces booklets and other literature on channels of study and outlets. The documents may be consulted at documentation and information centres in schools, in CIOs and in regional delegations of Onisep.

3.2.89
The *Centres d'information et d'orientation* (CIO – information and guidance centres) come under the Ministry of Education. Today there are over 580 such centres. Most of their work is done within schools, although they also cater for any kind of group. This extended access, moreover, has caused the centres problems with resources and

staff training. A few years ago only 5 % of clients were adults, whereas today – at least in the case of some centres located in larger towns – the majority of users are in fact jobseekers. The centres offer various services: preliminary contact, provision of information and documentation, individual discussions with a guidance counsellor, etc. In particular they have developed a system of self-documentation on trades and training courses. One pupil out of three at *collèges* consults a guidance counsellor, one *lycée* pupil out of four, one vocational *lycée* pupil out of six, but four out of five class III pupils go to see a counsellor (together with class V, class III is a key year for academic guidance).

3.2.90
It seems that the demand for information and guidance in the school environment, especially information on careers, is far from being satisfied, accentuating the widely criticised gap between the educational environment and the working world. An absolute priority is seen as improving the implementation of guidance from the schools to the universities. The figures on youth unemployment in France and the inadequacy of their preparation for working life bear witness to the importance of developing education in the options, during the school time devoted to guidance and seeking and providing information on jobs, employers and alternance training.

B) Vocational guidance outside the school

3.2.91
One of the major developments since the early 1980s has been the systematic incorporation of guidance into the French vocational training system, and young people have been the first beneficiaries of this development.

3.2.92
In 1981, B. Schwartz submitted a report to the Prime Minister on the integration of young people into society and the working world, stressing the urgent need for contact, information and guidance agencies. These bodies, he said, should bring together all the parties involved in social and occupational integration. He proposed the creation of *mission locales* (local missions) in the form of a multi-disciplinary scheme staffed by people made available both by the civil service and by local authorities. The ordinance of 26 March 1982 took up this proposal and created what were known as *permanences d'accueil, d'information et d'orientation* (PAIO – standing agencies for contact, information and guidance) and *missions locales*.

3.2.93
PAIOs are sited in support agencies (group of secondary education establishments (Groupements d'établissements de l'enseignement secondaire – GRETA), youth information centres, local agencies for employment, town halls, associations, etc.) in receipt of aid from the State, and on occasion in local authorities. They are expected to cater for young people aged 16 to 18 and possibly aged 18 to 25. PAIOs inform young people about opportunities for taking up training, to include training measures and the competent agencies. A protocol agreement with ANPE sets out procedures for cooperation between these two bodies. At present there are 402 PAIOs employing 1 500 people.

3.2.94
Local missions are set up in the form of an association. Unlike PAIOs, therefore, they have their own independent legal existence. They bring together all the partners involved in integration: elected officials, the authorities, economic and social partners, associations, etc. Local missions are set up by local authorities, after the *Délégation interministerielle à l'insertion des jeunes* (Interministerial delegation for young people's integration) have considered the application. They are financed jointly by the authority or authorities setting up the project. The State and the local missions cater for all young people aged 16 to 25 who encounter difficulties in social and occupational integration. They are authorised to cover all the problems of integration encountered by a young person, i.e. training and employment, but also housing, health and everyday life. In 1996, there were about 260 local missions.

3.2.95
PAIOs and local missions catered for 400 000 young people in 1991 and have monitored over 960 000 in all, 52 % of them girls. These bodies are seeing more and more young people with level V and IV qualifications.

3.2.96
Among the agencies operating in the vocational guidance of young people, of special note are the *Centre d'information et documentation pour la jeunesse* (CIDJ) and its regional centres (CRIJ). Set up by the *Secrétariat d'Etat à la Jeunesse et aux sports* in 1969, this network of 25 regional centres, plus youth information points and youth information bureaux, has as its terms of reference to welcome and inform young people in every field of daily life. Nevertheless, its work essentially focuses on the production and distribution of pamphlets on trades and training courses.

3.2.97
Finally, young people can also be catered for and guided by agencies which, although not designed exclusively for them, can help them because of other aspects of their position (ANPE, for example, in the case of jobseekers, *centres d'information sur les droits des femmes* (information centres for women's rights) in the case of girls, the CIOs that have already been mentioned, which provide information to school-leavers, etc.).

3.2.98
According to the Ministry of Labour, the fact that there are so many operators and schemes may paradoxically make it harder to obtain information, training and employment, especially for the more disadvantaged youngsters. Out of a concern for the consistency of the services offered and simplification of the circuits providing help to young people, the five-year law of 1993 paved the way for a range of services to be offered to the under-26s looking for jobs or training by employment, training and vocational integration bodies, in locations designated *espace jeunes*. This name is given to local missions, PAIOs and other specific bodies under certain conditions. They offer young people most of the services to which they are entitled, especially from ANPE.

3.3 Continuing vocational training

3.3.1
This section covers all the measures and schemes directed towards people who have already embarked on their working lives. As we indicated when reviewing the background to the French system of vocational training, its special feature is that France has a continuing training system which has given rise to the intensive production of regulations.

3.3.2
The French continuing training system still tends to operate on the basis of categories of beneficiaries. The status of the person aspiring to training determines the legal framework in which that training is provided. There are three main categories: employees in the private sector, public-sector employees and jobseekers. In the first case, training is the responsibility of the employer, in the second the Administration and in the third case the authorities (the State and the regions). There is, however, an exception to this distinction: under employment policy, the State is also involved in the training of employees, as are the regions under regional development policy. This description of continuing training provision will end with social advancement measures and vocational guidance for adults.

Training for those in employment

3.3.3
Employees have access to training either on their own initiative, pursuant to their statutory right to leave (3.3.4 to 3.3.26), or on the initiative of the employer under the training plan (3.3.27 to 3.3.34).

I) Leave entitlement

3.3.4
All employees are entitled to absent themselves from work on personal training leave to take vocational training. This is the main right to leave, although mention should also be made of the right to leave for a skills audit as well as other specific forms of leave for employees.

a) *Congé individuel de formation* – Personal training leave – for employees with an open-ended contract (CIF-CDI)

3.3.5
Although the principle of personal training leave was laid down in 1966, the conditions under which it could be implemented were not fulfilled until the law of 1971. At first employees taking personal training leave were unpaid during that period, but from 1971 on they were paid by the employer and then by the State. The condition for this remuneration was that an employee should take a course accredited by the State. This was not easy to implement and the range of choices was limited, which meant that recourse to personal training leave gradually became more rare over the 1970s.

The social partners relaunched the arrangement under the agreement of 21 September 1982, which set up a system of funding external to the workplace that could take responsibility for any employee. The law of 24 February 1984 institutionalised this system, which made a distinction between the right to leave and the possibility of obtaining funding.

1) The right to leave

3.3.6
The *congé individuel de formation* (CIF – personal training leave) is defined by the Labour Code as a right to absence whereby any employee, whatever the size of the enterprise for which he works, can take the training of his own choice, on his own initiative and on an individual basis, as distinct from the forms of training covered by the employer's training plan (Article L 931-1 of the Labour Code).

3.3.7
The employee has to fulfil two conditions before exercising this right. He has to show that he has two years' length of service as an employee, at least one of them within the enterprise. If he has already taken personal training leave, he must wait for a given period before submitting a further application. This period depends on the duration of the first personal training leave, but it ranges from six months to six years.

3.3.8
An employee satisfying these conditions makes an application for authorisation for absence to his employer, who may not refuse to grant the leave if the employee in fact meets the conditions. The employer may defer the leave only in two cases:
— if 2 % of employees are already absent on personal training leave. The leave is then deferred until one or more of the other employees return to work;
— if the employer feels that the employee's absence would adversely affect the smooth operation of the enterprise. In this case the employer may defer the leave by a maximum of nine months.

3.3.9
During the training leave, the remuneration received by an employee whose application is approved by the collection body (Opacif) depends on his reference earnings and the length of the training course (whether it is over or under one year or 1 200 hours).

3.3.10
During personal training leave, the contract of employment is suspended. Nevertheless, the CIF period is regarded as equivalent to working time as regards seniority rights. When the training leave is ended, the employee has the right to return to the enterprise. The employer is under no obligation to recognise the qualification.

2) Provision for funding

3.3.11
Employers with a workforce of 10 or more must set aside 0.20 % of their wage bill each year towards financing personal training leave. This amount is paid by 1 March

to a joint management/union body accredited for the management of the personal training leave (*Organisme paritaire de gestion du congé individuel de formation (Opacif)*).

3.3.12
These bodies apply to the State for *agrément* (accreditation) for the management of personal training leave. This accreditation gives them the authority to collect contributions from the employers. They are mainly the 26 *organismes paritaires regionaux du CIF (Fongecif)* – regional joint management/union bodies administering personal training leave in a group of industries) or OPCAs for specific branches of activity.

3.3.13
When a collection agency accredited for the management of training leave receives an application from an employee, it may refuse it only if the request does not come within the legal framework of the CIF or if the agency does not have the necessary funds to meet simultaneously all the applications that have been presented. It is then entitled to define the priorities by which it will determine what applications it will accept. Such priorities are established in the light of criteria such as the nature of training courses, the socio-occupational category, the size of enterprise, etc.

3.3.14
The agency accepts responsibility for an applicant's remuneration and the cost of his training, travel and accommodation. For remuneration over twice the minimum wage, the amount funded is 80 % or 90 % of the employee's reference remuneration received, depending on whether the training is for a period of more or less than one year or 1 200 hours. If the reference remuneration is twice the minimum wage or under, the agency pays 100 % of the reference remuneration whatever the length of the course. The employee is entitled to 90 % of his earnings for special training that is a particular priority. The CIF-accredited collection agency agreeing to take responsibility refunds the employer who has advanced payment.

3.3.15
The State contributes towards the funding of personal training leave under agreements which it reaches with the CIF-approved collection body or Copacif. Copacif is a joint management/union body responsible for interpreting the legislation and regulations on personal training leave, as well as negotiating with the authorities in the inter-industry sector.

3.3.16
The additional funding provided by the State is designed to enable such bodies to accept responsibility for long-term training and forms of training of benefit to the region, and also to promote the acceptance of applications made by people employed in enterprises with a workforce of fewer than 10.

b) Personal training leave for other employees

3.3.17
As defined by the law, personal leave is directed more specifically towards employees with an open-ended contract of employment, whether full-time or part-time. In practice, employees with 'interim' contracts, i.e. contracts of employment

for a specified term or temporary contracts, used to be excluded from benefits under the measure. The social partners laid down special arrangements whereby these two categories of employees became eligible for personal training leave. The law of 31 December 1991 extended these new rights.

1) Employees with a fixed-term contract of employment

3.3.18
Any person who can show that he has been employed for a consecutive or non-consecutive period of 12 months over the past five years, at least four months of which (consecutive or non-consecutive) have been under a fixed-term contract over the past 12 months, may apply for his training to be funded under the personal training leave measure. The application for personal leave must be made to the CIF-accredited collection agency competent for the enterprise in which the employee has performed his latest contract of employment, and the training takes place outside any contract of employment. The beneficiary receives remuneration that is based on the length of leave or type of training taken (between 60 % to 90 % of his former salary).

3.3.19
Employers fund this specific personal leave by means of a 1 % levy on wages paid to employees recruited under fixed-term contracts, which is in addition to other contributions payable by the employer for continuing training. This new right of access to personal training leave was set up by the social partners in their agreement of 24 March 1990, and established generally by the laws of 12 July 1990 and 31 December 1991.

2) Temporary workers

3.3.20
To cater for the particular status of temporary workers, the social partners laid down the conditions for access to personal training leave in the national occupational agreement of 9 June 1983. These conditions were restated at a subsequent date (ANI of 15 October 1991). The CIF contribution paid by temporary employment agencies amounts to 0.30 % of the wage bill (compared with 0.20 % under the ordinary law system).

3.3.21
Temporary workers are entitled to personal training leave as soon as they have done 1 014 hours' work in their occupation, including 507 hours in the temporary employment agency from which the application for leave has been made, over the 12 months preceding the date of the application. The period that must elapse between two periods of training leave is six months. The temporary work employment agency may refuse an application only if that application and the person's departure occur during the same period of work. The collection body for temporary workers is competent to take over the funding.

c) A review of the personal training leave measure

3.3.22
CIF-accredited collection bodies have taken responsibility for 30 000 training leaves per year, i.e. 65 % of the applications submitted. This rate is tending to decline, with applications rising more rapidly than acceptances. To prevent bottlenecks in the system, the social partners decided to raise the contribution from 0.10 % to 0.15 % of the wage bill in 1991, and then to 0.20 % in 1993. The courses taken are usually long courses leading to a qualification, in contrast with the average duration of courses taken under the enterprise training plan. Despite a successful record in terms of both quality and quantity (at least 500 000 people have taken advantage of personal training leave since 1983), various factors, including sizeable cutbacks in public-sector support, have weakened this measure considerably since 1994.

d) Leave for a skills audit

3.3.23
Any employee showing that he has worked for five years as an employee, of which at least 12 months within the enterprise, is entitled to leave for a skills audit. The purpose of these measures is to enable workers to analyse their vocational and personal skills, ability and motivation so that they can draw up a career plan and, where appropriate, a training plan for themselves.

3.3.24
Leave for this purpose may not exceed 24 working hours, continuous or non-continuous. The cost of the skills audit and payment of remuneration to the employee is borne by the CIF-accredited collection agencies, on more or less the same conditions as those regulating personal training leave. The agencies may decide to finance only those schemes taking place in audit centres accepting their specifications.

3.3.25
Former beneficiaries of fixed-term contracts of employment and temporary workers are entitled to the skills audit leave. The conditions as to seniority are the same as the original conditions for taking personal training leave (3.3.18 and 3.3.20).

e) Other rights to leave of absence

3.3.26
French labour law gives employees several other rights to leave of absence in connection with vocational training. In particular there are: the *congé enseignement*, 'teaching leave' that an employee can take, suspending his contract of employment, to serve as a trainer in a training establishment; the *congé examen*, leave that can be taken in order to sit an examination; the *congé de formation des membres du comité d'entreprise*, leave that can be taken by people newly elected to the works committee to 'professionalise' their skills; and the *congé de formation économique sociale ou syndicale*, leave that can be taken by any employee for training in the economic, social or union field, etc.

II) The *plan de formation* – training plan

3.3.27
The *plan de formation* is defined only by its differences from personal training leave. This is a set of training courses decided upon the employer for his employees and implemented under the employer's own responsibility. There must be consultation with representatives of the workforce. It is funded out of the employer's compulsory contribution to the funding of vocational training.

1) The employer's decision

3.3.28
Subject to the obligation to consult the works committee, the employer has the discretionary power to send any employee within its enterprise on a training course. This means that a person may go on training as a result of:
— the employer's unilateral initiative;
— an application from that employee, presented by himself or via the workforce representatives, subject to its acceptance by the employer.

3.3.29
Certain judicial decisions have set a precedent modifying this concept of the employer's discretionary power by requiring the employer to provide training when an employee's job changes. Early in 1992, the Court of Cassation confirmed that the employer has in particular an obligation to retrain employees whose employment is placed at risk by changes in their jobs, rather than making them redundant on economic grounds. If necessary the employer must provide additional training for the employee.

3.3.30
During training, the employee is regarded as being on a 'work mission'; in other words he is performing his contract of employment in a normal manner. In consequence the time spent on training by an employee must be remunerated as such by the employer. When the employee returns, in the absence of any agreement to the contrary, the employer has no obligation to take account of the skills that have been acquired.

2) Consultation of the works committee

3.3.31
The employer must consult the works committee on the training plan on two occasions. The first relates to the implementation of the plan in the current year, the second to the plan for the forthcoming year. Failure to consult the works committee does not prevent the employer from putting the training plan into action, but it will be liable to be charged with the offence of hampering the works committee in its duties, and its participation in the funding of the vocational training will be increased by 50 %.

3.3.32
The works committee must also be consulted every year on vocational training guidelines within the enterprise. Lastly, if the enterprise draws up a multi-annual

training plan, this must also be subject to consultation. More generally, any collective measure relating to vocational training must be submitted to the works committee, although this has only consultative power. It should be noted that in enterprises with a workforce of more than 200, the works committee must set up a training committee responsible for preparing its work.

3) Training leading to a qualification taken outside working hours ('co-investment')

3.3.33
If the principle has been laid down by an extended inter-industry agreement, part of the training taken under a training plan may be taken outside working hours and will not entitle the employee to remuneration. The training must be for at least 300 hours and be recognised as conferring qualifications. The employer must also undertake to recognise the employee's efforts and give him priority access to available jobs corresponding to the qualification he has acquired. The employee is entitled, however, to refuse such an agreement with the employer.

These provisions, the outcome of the agreement of 3 July 1991 and the law of 31 December 1991, show that (of course in a small number of cases) there is no longer a distinction between rights to leave of absence (personal training leave, skills audit leave, etc.) and the obligation to go on training (training plan). They introduce scope for negotiation between the employer and employee on training procedures and objectives. Agreements within branches of industry and in-company agreements had already adopted measures of this type before 1991.

4) Training time capital

3.3.34
A new measure has introduced a negotiated individual dimension into the enterprise training plan. Its purpose is to enable employees to take training during their working hours, at their own request, included in the enterprise training plan with the aim of improving their occupational skills or broadening their qualifications. It is introduced by collective agreements signed in branches of industry.

A legal provision enacted in 1995 states in particular that part of the funding for the personal training leave must go towards funding this new measure, known as *capital temps de formation* (training time capital).

Training in the public sector

3.3.35
The public sector breaks down into four subsets, each governed by its own rules: the State civil service, local civil service, hospital civil service and public-sector enterprises. Here we shall discuss only the first three sectors, since public-sector enterprises are to a great extent treated as comparable to enterprises in the private sector as regards training.

3.3.36
There are about 4.4 million public-sector employees, the breakdown being as follows:

— those employed by the State: 2 214 000 (teachers, police officers, the judiciary, the armed forces, civil servants in ministerial departments, etc.);

— those employed by local authorities: 1 400 000 people (staff employed by communes, General Councils and regional councils).

— hospital workers: 846 900 people.

3.3.37
In 1989 the State embarked on a policy of negotiating the objectives and methods of modernisation which (in June 1989 for State employees and in February 1990 for local and hospital employees) led to the signature of three framework agreements on continuing training in the public sector. These agreements transpose to the public sector the system existing in the private sector (training leave, obligation to finance training imposed on ministries and local authorities, etc.). This is only logical in that the human resource management techniques used in the private sector must be implemented in public service as well, with due regard for the specific nature of those public services. Training, which is one of the methods used in resource management, is being given the same role as it already has in the private sector. New outline agreements signed in 1992 and 1996 on continuing training for State employees have improved access to training, provided a better response to departmental needs and adapted the legal status of employees during their training.

A) State employees

3.3.38
The framework agreement on continuing training in the public service, concluded on 29 June 1989, provided for the setting-up of training plans by ministries and at every level, in consultation with unions. These plans were to take as their priorities the modernisation of services and the forward management of jobs and qualifications, particular efforts being devoted to the training of middle management in modern personnel management techniques. The framework agreement on continuing training signed in 1996 offers new resources for training (increase in the State's financial contribution, greater entitlement to training days for each employee) and has relaunched a quality policy (individualised monitoring of training).

3.3.39
The 1996 framework agreement on continuing training in the State civil service provides for an increase in the State contribution. In 1996, the Administration is to devote at least 3.8 % of the gross wage bill to continuing training measures. This financial contribution towards continuing training is in addition to initial training expenditure on the Administration's own colleges.

3.3.40
As regards employee's access to training, a distinction should be made between:

— measures taken on the Administration's own initiative. Under ministerial training plans, each civil servant should be able to take five or six days' training per year, during which he/she will be regarded as being in service.

— measures for the preparation of administrative competitive examinations. This is a training cycle or training course in which civil servants study for promotion or a move to another department through examinations and competitions taken by civil servants. They take the form of courses held during or outside working hours, and correspondence courses. Civil servants are entitled to take time off to study in this way.

— training leave. Civil servants are entitled to go on training to take vocational or cultural courses not offered by the Administration. An application for such training leave may not be refused if the total amount of leave granted is less than 0.20 % of the gross wage bill of the ministry concerned. The duration of leave is 1 month to 3 years. During a maximum period of one year, the civil servant has an allowance of 85 % of his gross salary. At the end of the training, he is under an obligation to remain with the Administration for a period equivalent to three times the duration of the course.

— restructuring leave. This was created by the framework agreement of July 1992 for civil services in departments that have undergone major restructuring, entailing personal retraining. Restructuring leave makes it easier for certain civil servants to transfer to another department, employment category or job in one of the three public-sector areas, or another occupation in the public or private sector.

B) Local civil servants

3.3.41
To fund their employees' training, the *collectivités territoriales* (communes, *départements* and regions) have to pay a yearly contribution based on the salaries they pay, up to a maximum of 1 %. This contribution is paid over to the *Centre national pour la formation dans la function publique territoriale* (CNFPT – national centre for the training of local civil servants) which:

— defines general guidelines for the vocational training of those employed by the local authorities;

— defines and provides for training programmes;

— conducts all studies and research on training.

3.3.42
The CNFPT has regional offices and offices for groups of *départements*. Local authorities have to establish a training plan each year, which is forwarded to the competent CNFPT office. If the authorities wish to organise training courses other than those provided by the CNFPT, they may go to training agencies direct but they must assume the cost of these measures, as the 1 % levy funds only those measures organised by CNFPT.

3.3.43
Local authority employees may apply to take training sessions with CNFPT in order to study for examinations or competitions or to improve their professional skills. They are entitled to take time off from their work. They may also be entitled to training leave, which is for a maximum of three years. This leave is paid only for the first year and up to 85 % of the person's salary. Leave is not a right, and it may be refused provided that the authority states the grounds for its refusal. An employee who is granted training leave has an obligation to stay on in that employment for three times the duration of the course.

C) Hospital employees

3.3.44
Hospitals must devote a minimum of 2.1 % of the wages paid out of their budget to vocational training measures. The funding is to be used for the training plan, which covers four types of measure:

— measures preparing people for competitions and examinations;

— training courses leading to recognised diplomas and certificates;

— adaptation measures;

— retraining measures.

3.3.45
Hospitals may be members of the *Association nationale pour la formation du personnel hospitalier* (ANFH). ANFH is a national association for the training of hospital staff whose terms of reference are to administer funds assigned to training by its hospital members, based on a policy and guidelines decided upon jointly by management and unions. ANFH has a network of 25 regional sections which set up multi-annual programmes and training measures for groups of hospitals.

3.3.46
Hospital workers are entitled to apply for training leave to take vocational training courses other than those provided under the hospital's training plan. To do this they must have at least three years' length of service and obtain authorisation for absence. The hospital management may not refuse a person's application more than three times.

To obtain remuneration during this leave, the employee must apply to ANFH to accept the cost of the training, since it is this body that collects a 0.15 % levy on hospitals' wage bill to fund employees' training needs. The amount paid out is 85 % of the employee's salary over a maximum period of 12 months. When the employee returns, he is under an obligation to work for at least three times the period of the course.

State measures

3.3.47
With decentralisation, regions have competence in principle for continuing training (see 1.1.8). But the State reserves the right to intervene in the case of measures going beyond the regional framework and directed towards certain target groups. The need to deal with problems of employment through training has brought the question of State intervention even more to the fore over the years. Today a distinction can be made among five major fields in which State measures are predominant:

— the integration of young people into the working world;

— measures associated with employment policy (combating long-term unemployment);

— aid to the development of training in the workplace;

— measures directed towards specific target groups;

— measures conducted in partnership with the regional authorities.

We have already considered the integration of young people into the working world (see 3.2.32 *et seq.*), and only the four other fields will be discussed here.

A) Measures to help jobseekers

3.3.48
The first mass State intervention in vocational training dates back to the late 1970s. The aim was to combat youth unemployment (3.2.33). From 1985, long-term unemployment became a new priority, to which the State devoted ever greater resources. These various measures are administered by the *Service publique de l'emploi*.

The government measures to promote employment that have been adopted since 1993 are essentially:

— entry or re-entry into the working world for the more vulnerable – often excluded – groups, such as the long-term unemployed;

— extension of part-time working as an alternative to redundancy, especially for enterprises in difficulties, and recourse to the adaptation and reduction of working time supported by incentive measures;

— the activation of unemployment compensation expenditure;

— reduction of the cost of labour (social security contributions relief) to place enterprises on a more competitive footing;

— the development of employment in the service sector, a job creation priority area.

A feature of employment has also been the efforts to promote local development (stimulating employment in SMEs and urban areas in difficulties), as well as action to encourage modernisation of the public-sector employment service. In 1995, 2.3 million people benefited from one of the employment policy measures.

1) The measures

3.3.49
Employment plans include a whole series of measures to help jobseekers return to work. The 1993 five-year law has helped to simplify the measures to support the reintegration of jobseekers, making them easier for the beneficiaries to understand.

3.3.50
Certain measures relate to all jobseekers:

— *stages*, or placements, approved by the State or regions, suggested to jobseekers to enable those wanting to enter the working world to access jobs calling for a qualification or to prepare for new types of work;

— *stages d'accès à l'emploi* (SAE), placements preparing for access to employment, which may be used to acquire the additional training a jobseeker needs in order to qualify for a job vacancy registered with ANPE. The *stage* may also be used to give an employee additional training with a view to internal promotion, thus allowing the post he previously occupied to be filled by recruitment from outside.

— finally, there is the joint action being conducted by the State and Unedic (*Union nationale pour l'emploi dans l'industrie et le commerce*, a national union for employment in industry and commerce) administered by management and unions and responsible for the supervision of unemployment insurance.

Since 1988, a measure known as the *Allocation de formation-reclassement* (AFR – training-retraining allowance) gives jobseekers a chance to retain their allowances under the unemployment benefits while they take a training course. This system of remuneration is funded by the insurance scheme itself and by State contributions. Almost 223 000 people benefit from the AFR every year.

3.3.51
Other measures are aimed solely at jobseekers encountering particular difficulty in finding work (the long-term unemployed, RMI beneficiaries, the over-50s, disabled workers):

— the *stage d'insertion et de formation à l'emploi* (SIFE – integration and job training placement). Established in January 1994, these placements are intended to promote a return to work by jobseekers aged over 26 who are experiencing difficulty in recruitment, through individual attention to their training needs for the purpose of employment. The State takes over the cost of training, remuneration and social security. These placements were taken up by 238 000 people in 1995. It is estimated that a third of trainees with such placements are then offered work.

— the *contrat initiative-emploi* (CIE) is a contract of employment set up by an employer on the basis of a convention with the State. The aim is to promote lasting re-entry to the working world for certain categories of people who are on the path to exclusion due to a lengthy period of unemployment. Signing a CIE confers the right to government help (a lump-sum payment, exemption from certain employers' contributions, training aid). The CIE has been opened up to certain low-skilled young people in difficulty (level V a and VI). In 1995, 154 000 were recruited under such contracts.

— the *Contrat emploi-solidarité* (CES) (see 3.2.75).

3.3.52
These measures are adopted each year under plans for employment which also offer financial and fiscal incentives for recruitment, especially to small and medium-sized firms, and public-sector aid for the unemployment setting up their own businesses or taking over existing businesses.

2) Implementation of measures

3.3.53
The *Service public de l'emploi*, which consists of ANPE, the *Direction départementale du travail, de l'emploi et de la formation professionnelle* and AFPA, is responsible for implementing these measures. This means that decisions are taken and programmes administered at the *département* level. The aim is to work on the micro-economic level to respond to the recruitment potential among enterprises in a given job catchment area. The funds are contributed by the *Fonds national pour l'emploi* (FNE) or out of resources entrusted to ANPE.

B) Aid for training within the workplace

3.3.54
It is the twofold aim of the authorities to help enterprises to modernise and become more competitive by supporting their training efforts, encouraging employers to set up forward planning of jobs and skills, and, when justified by the situation, giving support for internal and external retraining.

3.3.55
The aid provided is as follows:

— financial aid for the provision of training advice and the implementation of training measures is accessible to employers having a training development programme. Employers increasing their training expenditure from one year to the next may also be entitled to a tax credit.

— employers who expect to have to make people redundant on economic grounds are eligible for grants from the *Fonds national pour l'emploi* (FNE) if they arrange for internal or external retraining measures.

— employers embarking on measures or studies with a view to improving working conditions may apply for financial aid from the *Fonds pour l'amélioration des conditions de travail* (FACT – fund for the improvement of working conditions).

— employers wishing to set up the forward management of employment may receive up to 70 % of the cost of consultancy from the State.

Finally, certain forms of aid are provided within specific branches of the economy, especially contracts for forward studies where the objective is to determine foreseeable trends in employment and job skills in the sector in question.

3.3.56
A quick survey of these forms of aid can be made:

— forward studies contracts have been signed in all sectors of the economy (agriculture, the manufacturing industry, the service industries and the social sector). Since 1988 some 40 contracts have been concluded with individual branches of the economy;

— 265 training development commitment agreements were in force in 1994, financing the training of 180 000 employees in slightly over 13 000 enterprises;

— the training tax credit measure to assist employers agreeing to increase their expenditure on training year on year has been relatively successful. The amount of tax credits granted in 1994 was FRF 585 million.

C) Measures directed towards specific target groups or sectors

3.3.57
These measures are designed for target groups or sectors for which the State considers a special training effort should be made. They are implemented under national programmes, the management of which is sometimes decentralised to the local level.

3.3.58
The target groups concerned are usually defined by their social situation (single women, political refugees, prisoners, migrant workers, etc.). The sectors granted State help are either economic sectors (agriculture, crafts, etc.) or occupations in which there are skill shortages (engineers and management, trainers, etc.).

D) Measures implemented by the State and regions

3.3.59
The transfer of responsibility to regional councils, combined with the continuance of massive intervention by the State, made it necessary to harmonise actions at regional level.

3.3.60
The instrument for this harmonisation is the *Contrat de plan* – a plan contract signed by the prefect of the region and the President of each regional council. Plan contracts between the State and regions are concluded in pursuance of the general objectives laid down by the 10th national plan (1994–98). They do not just cover vocational training, although this is a priority in negotiations.

3.3.61
The total amount of funding over the five-year period was FRF 3150 million (ECU 480 million). 'Employment' accounts for 29 % of the credits, i.e. FRF 1150 million (ECU 180 million) over five years.

The priorities for the 'vocational training' area in 1994–98 were:

— structuring and modernisation of the provision of training

— support for the development of alternance training

— reinforcement of employee training policy

— measures to structure the training environment;

— specific regional measures (combating exclusion, illiteracy, etc.)

Regional training programmes

3.3.62
In education in the broad sense, regions have very extensive responsibilities (1.1.6 *et seq.*). In addition to their responsibilities in principle for vocational training, they have almost total responsibility for apprenticeship training for young people and major responsibilities for initial training. Through this threefold responsibility, regions are able to fund actions that meet the objectives of regional economic and social development.

3.3.63
Training measures are to be implemented through a regional programme for apprenticeship and vocational training to be drawn up and decided upon annually. This programme is in two phases: regional guidelines for training and apprenticeship are defined and the guidelines are translated into a programme of training in the form of a list of the training measures that will be financed. To finance these measures, the regions have funds disbursed by the State and their own tax revenue resources. Since the 1993 five-year law, the regions draw up a regional plan for the development of vocational training for young people, defining guidelines for regional policy on initial and continuing training for young people (the development of training channels, trends in the provision of training, determination of the target groups for training). The plan is produced by the regional councils.

A) Implementation of decentralisation

3.3.64
Regional councils operate with relatively lightweight training services. Their main method of intervention is to call for tenders from training agencies. Under the transfer of responsibilities, they are entitled to call upon the State's external departments (*Directions regionales de ministeres*) to process tenders submitted by agencies.

3.3.65
The measures introduced by regions are implemented in every field: the financing of training for jobseekers, aid for setting up training centres, financing social advancement and development training, participation in commitments for the development of training, etc.

3.3.66
Despite the plan contracts, the difficulties arise at two levels: whereas regional action does not have links at *département* level, the State has chosen this level for the implementation of policies on aid for employment and training for long-term jobseekers. This means that regional councils do not always find the party that is responsible for acting at regional level. Moreover, despite the *Comité coordination des programmes régionaux de formation et d'apprentissage*, exchange between regions and the dissemination of innovatory measures are still fairly limited. More generally, the regions criticise the State for not having thought through all the consequences of the laws on decentralisation and for not having made the region the main level for the organisation and supervision of vocational training systems.

B) Statistical summary of the measures conducted

3.3.67
In 1995, 440 000 people took all or part of a training course funded by a regional council. The average duration of training was about 270 hours.

3.3.68
The training provided is mainly directed at levels V, IV and III, accounting for almost 76 % of trainees. Jobseekers are in the majority, i.e. 56 % of trainees.

(For the financial summary, see 4.2.5).

Social advancement

3.3.69
Under the heading of social advancement come training courses taken outside working hours on a personal basis. In other words, these are mainly evening and distance courses.

3.3.70
Introduced by the law of 31 July 1959, social advancement was for the purpose of helping people to improve their prospects at work by establishing a mechanism of aid for training centres. In the absence of regulations allowing employees to take training in working hours, the teaching was organised in the form of evening courses. The creation of personal training leave diverted a number of employees from the evening courses, but they nonetheless retained their public. A significant proportion of the people taking such courses enrolled with the *Conservatoire national des arts et métiers* (CNAM) or its member centres. About 75 000 people, 30 000 of them in Paris and 45 000 in the provinces, take CNAM courses. CNAM is attached to the Ministry of National Education.

3.3.71
In the same way the *Centre national d'enseignement à distance* (CNED), which is also attached to the Ministry of National Education, has 200 000 people enrolling for its correspondence courses every year. In addition, 300 000 people take correspondence courses with private training agencies.

In other words, a total of nearly 600 000 people undertake training on an individual basis within the context of social advancement.

3.3.72
It must be pointed out, however, that CNAM and CNED enrolments have been at a fairly stable level, or have even been falling off over the past few years.

Adult vocational guidance

3.3.73
The systematic incorporation of vocational guidance is without doubt one of the major trends in the vocational training system over the past few years. This has transformed training systems into measures for retraining people for other jobs, within which guidance comes first and the training comes only after it has been established that it is really necessary.

A) Places of guidance

3.3.74
The French vocational guidance measure for adults before the introduction of the right to a skills audit for employees used to be almost solely directed towards jobseekers and was organised around the services provided by ANPE and AFPA. Around ANPE, various bodies provide preliminary contact, information and guidance for adults (the agencies catering for young people's guidance have been described elsewhere).

3.3.75
Every year ANPE provides over 6 million services in the form of preliminary contact, evaluation, information or advice. The agency may sub-contract these services to other bodies that it has empowered to do so.

3.3.76
The *Association pour l'emploi des cadres* (APEC) is financed out of contributions from managerial staff and employers. Created by the social partners, the purpose of the association is to support managerial staff in seeking employment and employers in their search for managers.

3.3.77
The public-sector guidance service bodies also include *Centres interinstitutionnels de bilan de competences* (CIBC). The plan was that each *departement* should have one such interinstitutional skills audit centre in 1992. The terms of reference of these centres are to arrange for skills audits and organise the provision of reviews where they can sub-contract some of the services they provide. The audit is defined as an overall step which helps an individual to identify what he has already achieved in the way of skills and to evaluate those skills.

3.3.78
Finally, it should be pointed out that the National Education Ministry's *Centres d'information et d'orientation* cater for all groups, although they are mainly directed towards young people (see 3.2.98).

3.3.79
There are two bodies for the vocational guidance of women:

— *Centres d'information sur les droits des femmes* (CIDF), which provide general help for women encountering social or occupational problems. The two pillars of the work of these information centres on women's rights are vocational information and guidance and information on social legislation.

— the *Retravailler* association, founded in 1974 and recognised as being of public utility, suggests guidance and training measures with a view to helping and supporting women wishing to return to work.

3.3.80
Other bodies that act as contact, information and vocational guidance points include:

— the collection agencies (*organismes paritaires collecteurs agréés* (OPCA)), whose terms of reference include the provision of information to employers and employees. Some of these OPCAs, especially those that administer personal training leave, arrange information meetings outside working hours.

— *maisons d'information sur la formation* (MIF), whose aim is to serve as a one-stop centre for information on the problems of employment and training in a given geographical area.

3.3.81
On the whole, the French vocational guidance system is notable for its diversity and the number of bodies providing contact, information and guidance. The tendency today is for the various services to be brought together in single centres, for example the *espaces jeunes* (3.2.98).

B) Guidance measures

3.3.82
As already indicated, vocational guidance has become part of the set of training measures for jobseekers. Since 1986, for instance, training measures have been entirely overhauled. These are for young people (*crédit-formation*), jobseekers (*allocation de formation reclassement* – retraining allowance), long-term jobseekers (SIFE placements) and employees who are laid off on economic grounds (retraining agreements).

3.3.83
All the measures set up are based on preliminary guidance, a prerequisite for the training. They all incorporate the concept of the skills audit and monitoring, so that the vocational training system for jobseekers today is far more than a mere set of routes of access to training. It is becoming a coherent, targeted system.

3.3.84
In addition to the measures to help jobseekers, it should be noted that 1991 was the year in which the right to vocational guidance was introduced, through the skills audit leave (see 3.3.23).

3.3.85
In conclusion, adult vocational guidance is provided via such a wide variety of institutions and measures that it is likely that access to guidance is becoming relatively easy for the employed or jobseekers. The problem has, then, shifted from access to the service and towards its content.

Chapter 4
The statutory and financial framework

4.1 Administrative and statutory measures

4.1.1
The regulatory and financial framework applies only to continuing training. The operating rules for the initial training system call for fewer comments, at least as this report is structured. There are three points that we feel are vital to an understanding of the workings of the continuing training system: the ways in which rules are created, the consultative bodies and procedure and the training market operating rules.

The creation of rules

4.1.2
In France there is a right to vocational training. The creation of this right may be very precisely dated to 9 July 1970, when the social partners took over a domain with which they had not previously been concerned. This appropriation tipped the scales so that the emerging right to training became part of labour law.

4.1.3
The inclusion of vocational training among the subjects for negotiation in the Grenelle Agreement in May 1968 suddenly brought training into the social field. The law of 16 July 1971 was to codify this situation by drafting the text which then became Book IX of the Labour Code, entitled *De la formation professionnelle continue dans le cadre de l'éducation permanente* (continuing vocational training in the framework of permanent education).

4.1.4
It is hard to define all the effects produced by labour law being linked with the right to training, but there were three essential factors:

— one consequence was to detach institutions within the public sector from the creation of rules. The *Fédération de l'education nationale* (FEN), for example, the teachers' union (and the largest in France in number of members), did not take part in the negotiations on vocational training and does not participate directly in the creation of rules. The impact of such an exclusion will readily be appreciated in a country where, as we have already pointed out, there is a very marked separation between the educational world and the working world.

— labour law is not really capable of taking into consideration the people furthest removed from employment. Although it has been possible to broaden labour law to encompass pre- or post-employment situations (mainly through training, moreover), it has been difficult to extend its limits much further.

— finally, there is a similarity of objectives between labour law and the right to training. Linked with employment, this right follows trends not only in labour law but also on the labour market. The introduction of agreements on derogations into labour law, for example, in other words agreements going back on certain rights granted by law to employees, resulted in the appearance of the same agreements on training. Following the personal training leave, where agreements could lay down financial conditions for accepting financial

responsibility at levels lower than the legal system, it was the training plan regulations which covered a practice of this kind through the concept of co-investment (3.3.33).

4.1.5
Although the affiliation between labour law and the right to training was such as to permit its development, it does have certain inherent limits, which are those pertaining to labour law itself.

Public decision-making and management bodies

4.1.6
Despite decentralisation, the administration of vocational training is still principally the province of the State, with the Ministry of Employment and Solidarity that is in charge of State policy in this field. On the other hand, the Ministry of Education, Research and Technology has responsibility for technical education. Finally, regional councils administer a regional policy on vocational training.

A) State structures

1) The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Vocational Training

4.1.7
It was the law of 16 July 1971 which set up an administrative body for vocational training. Answerable to a *délégué interministériel* (interministerial delegate) directly attached to the Prime Minister, its terms of reference were to ensure that employers were meeting their obligations to contribute towards the funding of vocational training, an obligation that was introduced under the same law of 16 July 1971.

4.1.8
In the mid-1970s, this administrative body was transferred to the authority of a *Secrétaire d'Etat à la formation professionnelle*, first of all attached to the prime minister and then to the minister for labour. The arrival of the left in power in 1981 resulted in the creation of a Ministry for Vocational Training, marking the importance attached to this issue. In 1984, however, the relationship between employment and training was to result in the creation of a single Ministry of Labour, Employment and Vocational Training. After the creation of a *Secrétariat d'Etat à la formation professionnelle* attached to the minister of labour between 1988 and 1991, in 1991, France returned to a single ministry for labour, Employment and Vocational Training, now called the Ministry of Employment and Solidarity.

Figure 14. **Responsible authorities**

Responsible authorities →	National	Regional	Sub-regional	Organisation/ institution
Young entrants to work	1 8 2 6 8	5	3 8 7 10	2 3 6 2 10 7 10 2
Higher level training	1 2 2 6	5 9		2 10 2 2 10 7 10 2
Continuing training of employees	1 8		7 7 10 8	7 8 7 8 10 7 10 10 7
Training for the unemployed	1 2 6 8	5 9	3 4 10	1 2 3 4 10 10

1. Ministry of Employment and Solidarity
2. Ministry of Education, Research and Technology
3. ANPE
4. DDTEFP
5. DRFP
6. Other public institution
7. Employers
8. Social partners
9. Regional councils
10. Training agencies

Note: Due to the number of organisations involved and the overlapping of responsibilities between institutions, this table only gives a partial impression of the total system

Function

system regulation

definition of content

evaluation and certificaton

information and guidance

Delivery

solely in education or training centres

by alternance training

by self-training

only in workplace

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a) The organisation of services at central level

4.1.9
In order to implement policy on vocational training, the minister for labour, employment and vocational training can as of this time call on the services of the *Délegation générale à l'emploi et à la formation professionnelle* (DGEFP – General Delegation for Employment and Vocational Training). The minister also exercises supervision over ANPE, AFPA and *Centre* INFFO, and co-supervision (together with the Ministry of Education) over *Centre d'études et de recherche sur l'emploi et les qualifications* (CEREQ).

4.1.10
The merger between the two former *Délégations* (DE and DFP) led in 1997 to the creation of the *Délégation générale à l'emploi et à la formation professionnelle* (DGEFP).

4.1.11
The DGEFP has a staff of 340. It includes a unit responsible for the legal and financial monitoring of vocational training, the *groupe national de contrôle* (GNC).

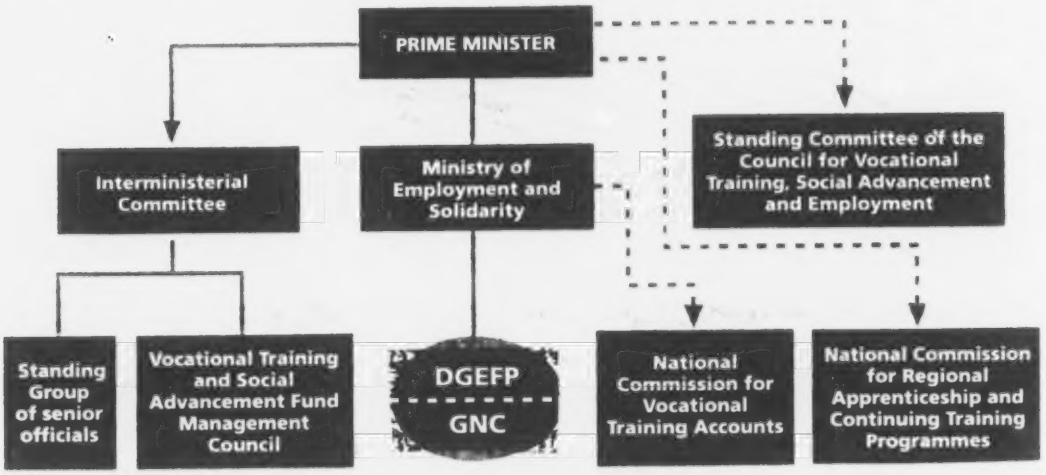
4.1.12
The DGEFP's terms of reference are:

- to be responsible for preparing and coordinating policy on employment, vocational training and social advancement;
- to monitor the legal, financial and technical implementation of that policy;
- to maintain liaison with local coordination and consultation bodies;
- to contribute to information measures under the policy.

4.1.13
The work of DGEFP is supplemented by that of institutions supervised by the minister for employment and solidarity.

4.1.14
The *Agence nationale pour l'emploi*, created in 1967, is a public-sector establishment having civil status and financial autonomy. It comes under the authority of the minister for employment and solidarity. Originally responsible for the job placement of jobseekers, since 1986 the agency has been given broader terms of reference for intervention on the labour market. Under these terms, it may implement vocational training measures targeted at jobseekers or employees transferring to new jobs, and it may administer public-sector funds for promoting employment which may have a training aspect. ANPE has 25 regional delegations, 103 delegations at *département* level and 742 *agences locales pour l'emploi*. It has a staff of about 15 500 people.

Figure 15. State departments at central level


PRIME MINISTER
Interministerial Committee
Ministry of Employment and Solidarity
Standing Committee of the Council for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment
Standing Group of senior officials
Vocational Training and Social Advancement Fund Management Council
DGEFP
GNC
National Commission for Vocational Training Accounts
National Commission for Regional Apprenticeship and Continuing Training Programmes
Line of authority
Consultation

DGEFP: General Delegation for Employment and Vocational Training
GNC: National monitoring group

SOURCE: *CENTRE INFFO, FICHES PRATIQUES DE LA FORMATION CONTINUE, 1998.*

4.1.15
The *Association pour la formation professionnelle des adultes* (AFPA – Association for adult vocational training), is headed by a board of directors with representatives of employers and employees and of the authorities. It is the leading training body in France. Its terms of reference are to direct its efforts towards the most disadvantaged groups (young people, the long-term unemployed, workers at risk of redundancy, etc.). It has 21 *centres psychotechniques régionaux* (CPTR – regional 'psychotechnic' centres), responsible for preliminary contact with and the guidance of trainees, 22 regional agencies and 131 training centres. It has a staff of over 10 000. AFPA has a budget of almost FRF 5 400 million (1995).

4.1.16
The *Centre pour le developpement de l'information sur la formation permanente* (Centre INFFO) has the terms of reference of making available to training professionals the information tools they require. It runs a documentation centre and a telecommunications information service, as well as producing publications and arranging information or training days.

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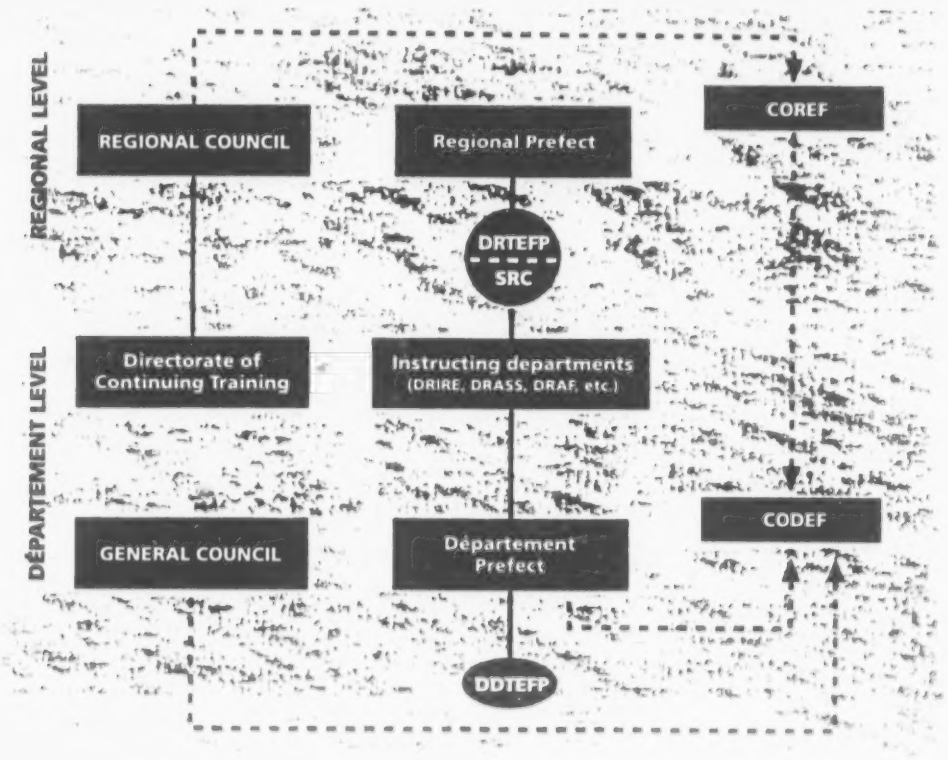
Figure 16. **State departments at decentralised level**



→ Line of authority

- - → Consultation

DRTEFP: Regional Directorates for Labour, Employment and Vocational Training
SRC: Regional Monitoring Service
DDTEFP: Département Directorate for Labour, Employment and Vocational Training
CODEF: Département Committee for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment
COREF: Regional Committee for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment
DRAF: Regional Directorate for Agriculture and Forestry
DRIRE: Regional Directorate for Industry, Research and Environment
DRASS: Regional Directorate for Health and Social Affairs

SOURCE: ***CENTRE INFFO, FICHES PRATIQUES DE LA FORMATION CONTINUE, 1998.***

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b) The organisation of services at decentralised level

4.1.17
The prefect of each region is responsible for implementing State policy on vocational training at regional level. The decentralised departments of the Ministry of Employment and Solidarity in each region are the *Directions régionales du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Formation professionnelle* (DRTEFP – Regional Directorates for Labour, Employment and Vocational Training) and, in each département, the *Directions départementales du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Formation professionnelle* (DDTEFP) – Département Directorates for Labour, Employment and Vocational Training, following the merger in 1994 between the regional training departments and those of the Ministry of Labour and Employment. They consist of 22 DRTEFPs and 101 DDTEFPs, and are the operational level at which policies are implemented.

4.1.18
The decentralised departments of labour, employment and vocational training were reorganised in 1995–96. In each region, the DRTEFP helps to implement and assess policies on employment and vocational training under the authority of the regional prefect: analysis of the employment situation, the labour market and vocational training in the region, proposed guidelines for employment and training policy, monitoring of training in the region, studies and prediction to help guide the action of the public authorities.

4.1.19
The DRTEFPs coordinate the actions of the DDTEFPs, the administrative bodies interfacing with employers and training agencies. The DDTEFP implement at the level of the département the policies defined by the authorities in the fields of work, employment and vocational training.

2) The Ministry of Education, Research and Technology

4.1.20
The role of the Education Ministry in the field of vocational training takes several forms.

In the first place, the Ministry of Education has under its responsibility initial vocational training, in other words the training that is provided in the education system to pupils and students (see 3.2.2 *et seq.*). The second field in which it intervenes is in the work of educational establishments on the continuing training market, whether these are higher education establishments through their continuing training service, or groups of secondary education establishments (*Groupements d'établissements de l'enseignement secondaire* – GRETA). To coordinate the work done by the various establishments, within each academic district the Ministry of Education has set up a *Délégation académique à la formation continue* (DAFCO – district delegation for continuing training). A third measure is the continuing training of its own teaching staff, in other words the training of its own employees.

Lastly, the education minister funds vocational training through the *Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers* and the *Centre National d'Enseignement à Distance* (see 3.3.70 and 3.3.71).

4.1.21
The Ministry of Employment and Solidarity and the Ministry of Education, as shown by the consultation that takes place under the reform of apprenticeship, will to a growing degree have to have a common policy on vocational training, confirming the interministerial nature of vocational training.

3) Other ministries

4.1.22
Other ministries, with the exception of the Ministry of Agriculture, do not intervene directly in the implementation of State policy on vocational training, although they may administer measures or training centres in their own fields.

B) Regional councils

4.1.23
Regional councils have their own vocational training policy. Each year they draw up a regional programme for apprenticeship and continuing training. They enjoy operating autonomy. A directorate of continuing training exists within each regional council. The council also produces a regional plan for the development of vocational training for young people which lays down all the training, guidance and information measures designed for young people. The policy of the regions is implemented with the help of resources from the *Fonds régional de l'apprentissage et de la formation professionnelle* (FRAFP – Regional fund for apprenticeship and vocational training).

Consultative bodies and procedures

4.1.24
A distinction should be made between bodies set up by the State and those set up by the social partners. For an overall view of the role of those involved in vocational training, however, we should also discuss the impact of joint union–management involvement in and negotiations on vocational training.

A) Consultative bodies set up by the State

4.1.25
These are attached to the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Employment, depending on whether they operate in initial training or in continuing training.

1) Consultative bodies in initial training

4.1.26
The *Conseil supérieur de l'éducation nationale* brings together the representatives of all the organisations concerned with matters of teaching and education. It must be consulted and may deliver its views on all questions of national interest relating to teaching or education, whatever the ministry concerned.

4.1.27
The *Conseil de l'enseignement général et technique* gives its views on regulations pertaining to curricula, examinations, the issue of diplomas, compulsory schooling and other matters pertaining to private-sector primary education, secondary education and technical education. It includes representatives from the authorities, parents and teaching staff in public- and private-sector establishments, as well as experts.

4.1.28
These two bodies meet at least once a year when convened by the minister for education. Between sessions, standing sections represent the councils and perform their consultative duties.

4.1.29
The *Haut-comité Education-Economie*, set up in 1986, is responsible for establishing standing consultation at the highest level between the education system and the economic partners. It may embark on any studies and make any proposals regarding general, technological and vocational education and training, as well as conducting research in the field of education and training.

4.1.30
Commissions professionnelles consultatives (CPC) are the main bodies for consultation with trade and professional circles with a view to defining technological and vocational diplomas and teaching. Organised by branch of industry, these occupational advisory committees consist of representatives of management associations, the unions and the Education Ministry and experts. Their function is the design and updating of technological training in the light of developments in qualifications. There are also CPCs attached to the Ministry of Employment and Solidarity.

2) Continuing training consultation bodies

4.1.31
Consultation between the social partners and the State takes place through three coordinating bodies: the *Conseil national de la formation professionnelle, de la promotion sociale et de l'emploi* (FPPSE – National Council for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment), a standing board that is an offshoot of FPPSE, the *Commission permanente*, and the *Conseil de gestion du fonds de la FPPSE*. (Vocational Training and Social Advancement Fund Management Council).

4.1.32
The *Conseil national de la FPPSE* is made up of representatives of the social partners and public- or private-sector bodies or experts, representatives of the Ministries concerned with training, and senior civil servants. Its terms of reference are to give its views on training policy guidelines in the light of the needs of the economy and employment prospects.

4.1.33
The *Commission permanente du conseil national de la FPPSE* (Standing Committee of the Council for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment) is chaired by the Minister responsible for vocational training and has representatives

of the social partners and ministries. It meets very regularly and gives detailed consideration to draft legislation and regulations of all kinds and policy guidelines on vocational training.

4.1.34
The responsibility for allocation of vocational training credits is held by the *Conseil de gestion de la formation professionnelle*. This Council for the administration of vocational training has six representatives of union bodies, six representatives of management organisations and 12 representatives of the Ministries.

4.1.35
The *Comité de coordination des programmes régionaux d'apprentissage et de formation professionnelle continue* has 12 representatives of the State, 12 of the social partners and one for each of the 26 regional councils. This committee for the coordination of regional apprenticeship and continuing training programmes is responsible for the coherence and effectiveness of measures undertaken by the State and the regions in the field of vocational training. It may propose any measure that will harmonise regional programmes and coordinate guidelines adopted by the State and regions.

4.1.36
At the decentralised level:

— the *Comités régionaux de la FPPSE* (COREF – Regional Committee for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment) are consulted by the State and the region on the training programmes they implement. They consist of the prefect of the region, the president of the regional council, five representatives of management organisations, five of the unions, one representative of *Fédération de l'education nationale* (FEN – the National Education Federation), two representatives of public-sector educational establishments, one of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry and one of the Chambers of Trades, one of the Chambers of Agriculture and a representative of the voluntary and social sector.

— at the *département* level, the *Comité départemental de la FPPSE* performs the same role as the *Comité régional* on the regional level.

4.1.37
The role and responsibilities of these committees were reinforced by the 1993 five-year law. They are still advisory bodies, however.

B) Bodies set up by the social partners

4.1.38
Apart from the bodies set up by the authorities on which they are represented, the social partners have established bodies for consultation on, and the regulation and management of, vocational training.

1) Joint management/union bodies

4.1.39
A distinction should be made between bodies having general responsibilities for employment and training and those that specialise in the field of vocational training. In the former case, these are the *Commissions paritaires de l'emploi* and Copire (see 4.1.41), whereas the latter are the *Comité paritaire national pour la formation professionnelle* (CPNFP), Agefal and Copacif.

4.1.40
The general terms of reference of the *Commissions paritaires nationales de l'emploi* (CPNE – national joint employment boards) are to promote training policy within each branch of trade and industry. Their missions range from studying existing methods of basic and advanced training and vocational adaptation at each level of qualification, and monitoring developments in titles and diplomas of technological and vocational education.

4.1.41
The *Commissions paritaires interprofessionnelles régionales de l'emploi* (Copire – joint regional inter-industry employment boards) have the role in the field of training of promoting training policy within their own region. Their missions are much the same as those of CNPEs at the national level. They may adopt initiatives on vocational guidance for young people.

4.1.42
The *Comité paritaire national pour la formation professionnelle* (CPNFP – national joint management/union committee for vocational training) was set up by the agreement of 3 July 1991. This committee consists of two representatives per union signatory to the agreement (CFDT, CFTC, FO and CGC), and two representatives of the signatory management associations (CNPF, CGPME, UPA). The task of the CPNFP is to provide information to employers and employees on the agreement of 3 July 1991 and to state the procedures for the implementation of this agreement. It is the body that talks to the authorities regarding questions of vocational training. A joint technical group is set up within the committee to monitor alternance training matters.

4.1.43
Regarding Agefal and Copacif, see 3.2.67 and 3.3.15.

2) Management bodies

4.1.44
The 1993 five-year law called upon the social partners to reconstruct the system of collecting and managing the training funds. The *Organismes paritaires collecteurs agréés* (OPCA, joint accredited collection agencies) have been officially set up since 1 January 1996. They are a result of the desire of the law-makers in 1993 to embark on a sweeping reform and rationalisation of the system for the collection and management of contributions from employers. They took over from the training insurance funds (FAF), *organismes mutualisateurs agréés* (OMA – accredited mutual funding agencies), OCA and *organismes paritaires de gestion du congé individuel de formation* (Opacif – joint bodies for the management of personal training leave).

The management/union collection body has retained an essential place under the rules defined at the time of the reform that followed on the five-year law. The foundations for this reform were the tightening-up of the network of collection agencies, based on the concept of branches of industry or geographical area, the separation of the activities of funds collection and the provision of training and a strengthening of the requirement for a joint management/union body. The major reorganisation that took place has helped to reduce the number of accredited collection agencies (their number has been reduced by about two thirds, which has led to regrouping in many sectors), and their creation by branches of industry on a principal basis at national level and at the inter-industry regional level on a complementary basis.

4.1.45
Two types of OPCA co-exist in the newly configures network of collection agencies:

— OPCAs accredited for the collection of training plan contributions owed by enterprises with a work force of 10 and over, and those with fewer than 10, as well as collection of alternance contributions;

— OPCAs accredited for the collection of personal training leave contributions.

4.1.46
The State has accredited 97 OPCAs, and these now collect contributions from employers (before the reform they numbered 255). These agencies have national, inter-regional or regional competence.

3) Negotiations in the field of vocational training

4.1.47
The law of 24 February 1984 introduced a five-year obligation to negotiate on training objectives and resources in sectors of the economy. The agreement of 3 July 1991 broadened this obligation to negotiate by redefining the subjects that must be discussed. This revision of the content of negotiations within individual branches of the economy was motivated by the concern to take into account the forward management of jobs in the run-up to the single market in 1993. Negotiations must relate to:

— the training efforts that should be deployed to help lower-skilled employees, especially to facilitate their career development;

— procedures for the *dédit-formation* (a commitment by an employee to continue to work for the enterprise for a certain period following his training);

— a search for appropriate solutions to the specific problems of training in small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular those with a workforce of less than 10;

— the possible effects of changes in working hours on training needs;

— procedures to enable employers to take into account the provisions of any intra-branch agreement arising from negotiations;

— procedures for taking the European dimension of training into account.

C) Review of consultation in the field of vocational training

4.1.48
The large number of internal and external consultation bodies and procedures, as well as the management of training schemes, is evidence of the central role of the social partners in the continuing training system (it is far less important in the education system). This role is entirely logical having regard to the procedures for the creation of legislation and regulations, and the history of the French system.

4.1.49
This system of the continuing consultation and presence of the social partners has the undoubted advantage of involving employers and employees in the vocational training system through their representatives. It is likely to lead to more stringent supervision of training measures and greater attention to the actual needs of enterprises and employees. It also is likely to introduce innovations, in that the social partners are becoming more professional about training problems.

4.1.50
It does, however, come up against two difficulties:
— the first is that of the resources that have to be committed by the social partners to make the system operate. These resources are both quantitative, since the proliferation of such bodies means that more representatives have to be found, and qualitative. The complexity of the system and the problems raised by training call for special skills for people to be able to play an effective part in consultation or administer local agencies. The problem is acute at the local level, which is tending to become the level at which decisions are actually taken on the implementation of policies.

— the second difficulty is that the State cannot relinquish its role as protector of the public interest (the joint union–management concept is influenced by relations between confederation structures and organisations in specific branches of the economy). Furthermore, whole sectors are not covered by management confederations and so are not bound by the agreements signed at inter-industry level, in particular the health and social sectors.

4.1.51
One of the merits of the agreement of 3 July 1991 and its codicil of 1994 is that they clearly define the respective roles of the State and the social partners; under the agreement the latter organise systems for the management of schemes that tend towards autonomy.

The training market

4.1.52
Continuing training accounts for more than FRF 125 000 million per year. It is a market in its own right, therefore, and one that has been steadily expanding over the past few years. A feature of this market is the number and diversity of training agencies and the volume of funds available. To clarify this market, which has experienced some abuse, in 1990 the authorities launched a campaign to 'clean up' and upgrade the quality of training. This took the form of tightening up the rules governing training, especially when it is funded by the State. The market for training is characterised by a concern for the recognition of qualifications, which to

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a great extent is related to the image attached to diplomas in France, and which has led to the creation of an original system of certification.

A) The training apparatus

4.1.53
Any individual or corporate body lodging a prior declaration of its existence with departments supervising vocational training is recognised as a training agency. The obligation to make a declaration is accompanied by an obligation to allow those departments to audit the training and financial balance sheet each year. It is the use of these two documents that makes it possible to discern more clearly the realities of the training market.

4.1.54
Training providers are vary varied in their status (private, public or quasi-public bodies) and their economic and financial weight.

Table 8. Training agencies

Status	1990	1991	1992	1993	1990-1992	1992-1993
Private agencies	34 888	38 702	42 295	45 765	+ 31%	+ 8%
Quasi-public agencies	437	446	458	456	+ 4%	+ 0%
Public agencies	972	1 034	1 095	1 172	+ 21%	+ 7%
Total	**36 297**	**40 182**	**43 848**	**47 393**	**+ 31%**	**+ 8%**

SOURCE *DÉLÉGATION À LA FORMATION PROFESSIONNELLE*

4.1.55
As of 31 December 1994, the national supervisory group audited 53 200 training agencies that had made a prior declaration. Nevertheless, the number of active agencies is only 35 350, only 5 800 agencies having a turnover of over FRF 1 million (approximately ECU 150 000). These 5 800 training agencies account for 85 % of the total training turnover. The 136 training agencies declaring a turnover of over FRF 25 million (0.4 %) account for 12.9 % of total earnings from training.

4.1.56
Training funders can be broken down into four major categories: employers, joint management-union bodies, the authorities and the training agencies themselves under sub-contracting transactions. The funding of their training by individuals is still marginal (2.9 % of all activity by training agencies).

4.1.57
The training market cannot really be said to be a competitive sector. It is only marginally competitive, mainly in the private sector. Public agencies and associations prefer to work with the authorities, whereas employers tend to deal directly with commercial companies. Private funds go to the private sector and public funds to the public sector, or at least towards the non-commercial sector. One particular

reason for this pattern of flow of funds is the scale of charges recognised by the authorities: these are relatively low and are attractive only to the public sector that operates on marginal profits (some of the operating costs of public-sector agents are covered by their general budget), as well as non-profit-making agencies. On the other hand, commercial companies quote much higher rates to enterprises.

4.1.58
The market for continuing training is dynamic and is characterised by a high turnover of training agencies. An increasing number are adopting a commercial status (*Société anonyme* or *Société à responsabilité limitée*). 'Commercial' training agencies are 41 % of the declared agencies. It seems, then, that the provision of training is tending to become an economic activity in its own right.

4.1.59
In terms of the number of trainees taken on, the training and financial audits show that there were 8 500 000 trainees in 1994, equivalent to 828 million training hours, through the training agencies.

B) Training methods

4.1.60
In France the act of training has for a long time been regarded as a collective concept – as a *stage* – based on the unity of time and place, and it is still the main form in which training is organised. There have, however, been several developments.

4.1.61
The State is trying to promote forms of training that would allow for tailor-made training itineraries. Training agencies are invited to set up modular systems of training so that each trainee can take only those subjects that he really needs. Since 1985 *ateliers pédagogiques personnalisés* (APP) have been set up, the aim of these personalised training workshops being to give young people or adults additional general or technological education or training that has been specially designed for them. There are 500 such workshops in France, catering for 150 000 young people and adult volunteers.

4.1.62
Because of the mutual suspicion of the education system and the working world, alternance has never really been recognised as a preferential form of training. This might well change in the near future, with the permanent establishment of youth integration measures (3.2.32), the revitalisation of apprenticeship (3.2.38) and tutor training measures. Such recognition of the workplace as the place of training will no doubt be one of the major trends in the years to come.

4.1.63
There has not been the development in multi-media training looked for by the authorities. Although undoubtedly poorly adapted to Latin culture, this form of training should develop over the years to come.

4.1.64
The agreement of 3 July 1991 regulating forms of training leading to qualifications and taken outside working hours opens up the path to the development of correspondence training or training taken at special times.

4.1.65
The main provision of training in 1992 is still the 'brochure course' (a group course away from the workplace chosen from a brochure based on its curriculum) or various kinds of group courses subsidised by the authorities. It has been one of the challenges of the 1990s to adapt the provision of training and the investment of training agencies to new, more flexible and more personalised methods.

C) Regulation of the training market

4.1.66
This is based essentially on the law of 4 July 1990, the aim of which was to establish a consumer's right to training. This law places an obligation on training agencies to reach contracts with their trainees, setting out the rights and obligations of the parties. It reinforces the powers of vocational training supervisory bodies and regulates advertising.

4.1.67
At the same time, the State is to establish a policy on the accreditation of the training agencies with which it works. It is the authorities' resolve to see the number of training agencies reduced, with a higher average turnover for those that remain. They are encouraging grouping, merger and cooperation.

4.1.68
The professionalisation of training is one of the major challenges to training providers. Training professionals have set up their own single union for vocational training (the *Fédération de la formation professionnelle*). They are trying to establish measures for monitoring and improving the quality of what they provide (quality charters and labels) and promoting the image of training.

4.1.69
It should be added that, in the context of the organisation of the training market, in 1988 the professional organisations and representatives of the staff of training agencies signed a national collective agreement for training agencies that lays the foundation for a 'trainers' statute' and regulates the overall position of training staff in the private sector. This agreement also states the number of hours that trainers must spend with trainees and the number they must devote to preparation, research or other activities.

4.2 The financing of vocational training

4.2.1
In this section we shall discuss the statistics for the overall spending on education and the economics of vocational training before listing the expenditure of the leading funders of training: the State, the regions and employers.

Overall spending on education and training

4.2.2
In 1994, education accounted for FRF 538 000 million (ECU 83 700 million), i.e. 7.3 % of GDP. The breakdown of funders is as follows:

State	FRF 351 000 million
Local authorities	FRF 121 000 million
Individuals	FRF 38 000 million
Employers	FRF 28 000 million

SOURCE: *MINISTRY OF EDUCATION.*

4.2.3
Continuing training accounted for close to FRF 133 000 million in 1994 (ECU 20 460 million), 1.8 % of GDP. The breakdown of funders is as follows:

State	FRF 60 000 million
Employers	FRF 51 000 million
Local authorities	FRF 7 700 million
Unedic	FRF 7 600 million
Other public authorities	FRF 3 400 million
Households	FRF 1 600 million

SOURCE: *FINANCE BILL FOR 1997.*

These amounts were used for preliminary integration training (18 %), the training of people already in employment (61 %) and the training of the unemployed (21 %).

State funding

4.2.4
State expenditure of FRF 60 000 million (ECU 9 240 million) in 1994 breaks down as follows:

— FRF 30 800 million for continuing training (including FRF 12 900 million for the operation of measures, FRF 13 800 million for remuneration of trainees, FRF 3 600 million for exemptions from social security contributions on alternance training contracts and FRF 500 million for tax credit);

— FRF 25 000 million for training of its own staff;

— FRF 4 200 million for apprenticeship.

Funding by regions

4.2.5
Regions fund the training measures they implement themselves from the decentralisation budget they receive from the State (54 % of total expenditure) and from their own resources and the funding they obtain from structural funds.

4.2.6
In 1995, spending on vocational training and apprenticeship funded by the regions amounted to FRF 10 100 million (ECU 1 550 million). This breaks down into FRF 6 300 million on vocational training and FRF 3 400 million on apprenticeship, an increase of 20 % over 1994. The Île-de-France accounted for FRF 1 300 million, Rhône-Alpes for FRF 970 million, the region of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Or for over FRF 600 million and Nord - Pas-de-Calais over FRF 600 million. The other regions have budgets of an average of FRF 100 to 500 million.

Funding by companies

4.2.7
Companies with a workforce of at least 10 people must devote 1.5 % of their annual wage bill to the funding of vocational training. Out of the 1.5 % levy, 0.20 % is set aside for personal training leave, 0.40 % for alternance training and 0.9 % for the companies' training plan.

4.2.8
In 1995, companies devoted 3.30 % of their wage bill to training their employees, an amount of over FRF 47 000 million. This average conceals marked disparities from one sector to another and among enterprises of different size (those with a workforce of 10 to 50 people devote less than 1.8 % to training, whereas enterprises with a workforce of over 2 000 exceed 5 %).

4.2.9
Since 1992, companies employing fewer than 10 have had to pay 0.15 % of their wage bill over to a collection agency accredited for the training plan. Heads of undertakings also have to pay a flat-rate contribution to finance their training. A contribution of 0.15 % of the wage bill payable by employers of domestic workers in the home was set up by the social partners in April 1996. This extension of the field of participation, as well as the growing participation of enterprises having a workforce of more than 10, reflected the need to find additional funding for the training of employees.

4.2.10
Expenditure by companies breaks down as follows:

— the operation of training measures (16 % internal training and 19 % external training)	35 %
— trainees' remuneration	32 %
— payment to OPCAs	19 %
— payment to Opacifs	7.3 %
— others	6.7 %

Table 9. **Global budget for vocational training**

Measures and type of target groups	Finance Bill 1994	Finance Act 1994	Finance Bill 1995
I - Continuing training			
A - Measures in favour of young people			
Work, employment and vocational training			
1) Initial contact and guidance facilities			
2) Personal training leave and measures for young people (excluding PAQUE - Active preparation for qualifications and employment)	320.00	330.30	330.40
3) Exemption from social security contributions (qualification contracts)	5 076.21	5 066.21	5 020.04
Sub-total A	2 789.00	2 789.00	3 173.00
	8 185.21	**8 185.51**	**8 523.44**
B - Other actions			
Agriculture			
Training and education schemes in the rural environment			
Craft and commerce	118.00	124.00	144.00
Training schemes			
National education	85.30	85.30	97.57
Vocational training and promotion measures			
Higher education	800.98	800.98	767.21
Training and promotion measures			
Youth and sport	440.59	440.89	443.52
Social advancement and adult training			
Justice	19.70	19.70	19.70
Professional training of lawyers			
Tourism	10.71	10.71	10.71
Specific training measures			
Work, employment and vocational training	13.00	13.00	10.50
National vocational training programme			
Association pour la formation professionnelle des adultes (AFPA) and other training agencies	2 005.56	2 006.38	1 997.11
Placements for the long-term unemployed	4 001.76	4 006.76	4 016.80
Payment to the *Union nationale inter-professionnelle pour l'emploi dans l'Industrie et le Commerce* (Unedic) in respect of the training-retraining allowance	5 593.66	5 598.66	5 788.65
State contribution to personal training leave	2 800.00	2 800.00	3 484.00
Operation of disbursement services (*Centre national pour l'aménagement des structures des exploitations agricoles* - CNASEA)	500.00	500.00	50.00
Operation of disbursement services (*Union nationale inter-professionnelle pour l'Emploi dans l'Industrie et le commerce*)	190.00	190.00	272.82
Sub-total B	7.50	7.50	7.50
	16 586.76	**16 598.88**	**17 110.09**
Total I (continuing vocational training)	**24 771.97**	**24 784.39**	**25 633.53**
II - Apprenticeship			
A - Reform and reinforcement of apprenticeship			
Work, employment and vocational training			
Crafts and commerce	439.35	439.37	422.37
B - Exemption from social security contributions	23.56	23.56	25.56
Work, employment and vocational training			
Total II (apprenticeship)	2 654.90	2 654.90	2 927.00
	3 117.81	**3 117.83**	**3 374.93**

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SOURCE **FINANCE BILL FOR 1995**

Chapter 5
Qualitative aspects

5.1 Certification and qualifications

5.1.1
Over the past 20 years, the methods of validation in France have become highly diversified. This trend has inevitably influenced the role of the social partners. it has been accompanied by a greater awareness of individual qualifications in labour conventions agreements and collective agreements. In France the State has long held a monopoly for the award of titles and diplomas, both in general education and vocational education and even in apprenticeships. The prerogatives of validation granted to the social partners and to enterprises have created a breach in the State monopoly.

5.1.2
French law provides for four types of recognition of qualifications:

— the title or official diploma,

— possession of an accredited diploma or title,

— recognition of a qualification by a collective convention,

— mention of this qualification in a list drawn up by the *Commissions paritaires nationales de l'emploi* (CPNE – Joint National Employment Boards).

5.1.3
In France, the creation of technology teaching diplomas is the sole responsibility of the public authorities. The demand for the creation of an Education Ministry diploma or title may, however, come from the trade or industry or from enterprises. Before submission to the minister, a technology or professional teaching diploma is forwarded to the competent occupational advisory committee (*commission professionnelle consultative* (CPC)). The committees have a strictly advisory role; they consist of representatives of employees and employers, representatives of the authorities and qualified persons.

5.1.4
Homologation (official and national recognition of the level of a training course) is covered by the law of 16 July 1971 on technology teaching. It is granted by the Prime Minister on the proposal of the *Commission technique d'homologation des titres et diplômes*. This technical validation board is made up of representatives of the ministries, the social partners and representatives of institutions operating in the field of vocational training.

The law distinguishes between diplomas issued under the authority of the Ministry of National Education and those issued by other Ministries. Diplomas coming under the Ministry of Education are officially validated, whereas diplomas coming under other ministries have to go through a validation procedure. This consists of examining the manner in which training is provided and the results it produces.

At present over 3 000 titles and diplomas have been validated, not including Ministry of Education diplomas.

This multiplicity of titles and diplomas has the advantage of making it easier to recognise training courses that are of special interest in a given sector or for a given target group. On the other hand, its drawback is that it is hard to find out about these titles and diplomas and to take them into account under a collective agreement.

5.1.5
Collective agreements define the qualifications and the duties attached to those qualifications. The possession of a title or diploma is sometimes essential to gain access to the qualification recognised by the collective agreement. Nevertheless, in accordance with the principles of the right to work, the qualification will be issued by the employer and, in the event of a dispute, it will be established in the light of the duties actually performed, rather than the individual's personal qualifications.

The problem of recognition by the enterprise of the qualifications acquired by employees is still unresolved. The representatives of the employers have consistently refused to establish mechanisms or procedures for the automatic recognition of qualifications acquired by employees through a training course.

5.1.6
Certification issued by branches of trade and industry is another method of recognising occupational titles. This new path to validation has the special feature of being organised under the auspices of the *Commissions paritaires nationales de* l'emploi (CPNE). These joint national employment boards are set up by the branches of trade or industry and their terms of reference cover the subject of training and employment (see 4.1.40). They define the procedure and criteria for the creation of *Certificats de qualification professionnelle* (CQP – vocational qualification certificates). The evaluation of a qualification acquired is organised under the responsibility of an assessment board supervised by the competent CPNE. It is based on the organisation of qualification tests and an evaluation of occupational competences as displayed in a work situation.

This method of validation, originally centred on qualification contracts, is expanding in certain branches to all the training measures aimed at those in employment.

The concept of the CQP is to prepare as closely as possible for a qualification that is defined by the sector of industry or trade and that can be directly used in the workplace. It also helps to bridge the certification gap in the range of titles and diplomas issued, as well as supplementing one of those titles or diplomas. In 1995 there were some 150 CQPs. Widely differing branches of trade or industry are concerned with this method of certification, but as yet few people have been certified by this route (about 3 000 in 1995).

5.1.7
Two laws, one enacted in 1985, the other in 1992, permit the validation of occupational achievements for the issue of diplomas. The aim is to introduce the opportunity for anyone who has engaged in an occupation for five years to ask for his occupational achievements to be recognised as evidence of the knowledge and abilities required in obtaining a diploma. Validation is granted by a board of teachers and persons competent in the activities concerned. Its effect is to waive the obligation for the person to pass some of the tests for the diploma concerned, or to enable him to apply for admission to training at a higher level than that which he has initially achieved.

5.2 The training of trainers

5.2.1
The population of trainers is extremely varied. Some 395 000 people work as trainers in France, and their occupations and status differ widely in practice. The recent development of diplomas specific to the training professions is a sign of the growing professionalism of the trainer.

5.2.2
The profession of trainer has given rise to several forms of organisation, on both the management and the trade union sides. In 1991, three employers' organisations (UNORF, CSN-FOR and Syntec formation) decided to come together and create the *Fédération de la formation professionnelle* (FFP – Vocational Training Federation).

The status of personnel of private-sector training agencies is governed by a national collective agreement of 10 June 1988 which lays down the working and employment conditions of trainers and their social guarantees. This agreement states that the training agencies must devote 2.5 % of their wage bill to the professional training of their staff. Out of this 2.5 % levy, provided that the wage bill of trainers amounts to at least 50 % of the training agency's total wage bill, half of the amounts whose allocation is not otherwise regulated by a statutory provision or agreement must be set aside for the training of trainers.

Trainers working within training agencies are either permanent or temporary employees of the training agency, or outside personnel with self-employed status.

Training agencies often call upon outside parties for training (50.2 % in the case of private-sector training agencies and 74.6 % for public training agencies).

5.2.3
Internal personnel of enterprises whose duties are to train are covered by the collective agreement applicable to those enterprises. On a par with all the other employees, they are entitled to the cost of their training being paid by their employer as part of the employer's compulsory financial contribution to continuing training. Training leave has been introduced, so that any employee having one year's length of service with the enterprise may take leave for professional training in an outside educational establishment or training agency. The training provided must match the employee's professional speciality.

5.2.4
Personnel working in the field of training (as trainers, coordinators, administrative staff and training advisers) in large institutions such as the AFPA, Ministry of Education or Ministry of Agriculture are given internal training.

5.2.5
In France, training personnel on the labour market have relatively high levels of training. No specific initial training is required to act as trainer in the workplace or in training bodies, but employers impose more stringent conditions at the time of recruiting trainers. On recruitment, these are generally at the level of Bac +2.

5.2.6
About 1 500 agencies offer training in training activities to professionals or people who occasionally act as trainers. Over 250 diplomas or validated qualifications preparing people for training professions have been recorded. They are issued by university establishments or training agencies. The diplomas are mainly issued as part of the teaching of education science and, to a lesser extent, the teaching of psychology.

Diplomas leading to the profession of trainer often entail practical experience of training as a condition of admission. While teaching methods are still at the heart of trainers' work, the profession is increasingly demanding the deployment of new skills such as vocational guidance, the management of training, advice and engineering.

The training provided in training professions generally covers every aspect: teaching methods, organisation, management, evaluation, engineering. The curricula and titles of the diplomas and their organisation bear witness to the wide diversity of the provision of training for trainers. The prevailing types are still 'generalist training' with a curriculum of teaching methods. Some courses are closely linked with a given economic sector.

5.2.7
The recent creation of specific diplomas in the profession of trainer shows that the need to adapt to rapid changes in training professions is being met. The improvement in the quality of training provision is not unrelated to those changes. Training agencies are to a growing extent embarking on quality procedures (AFNOR standards, ISO 9000 certification, quality charters, OPQF quality labels), to satisfy the needs of those seeking training. In May 1996, 25 training bodies had ISO 9001 certification.

5.2.8
The training of trainers is funded by the authorities (the State, regional councils) or employers, or by the individuals themselves. The authorities are aware of the issue of training for trainers and the contribution it can make to improving quality of performance. In 1994, the State allocated FRF 10 million to the training of trainers.

Chapter 6
Current and future trends

6.1 Development factors

A sharp acceleration in the rate of development of vocational training measures in the early 1990s has been influenced by two sets of factors: internal challenges, which set ambitious objectives for training, and external challenges, such as European integration. Although not all the challenges have been met today, we can look to the future and predict major changes in the system of training.

Internal challenges

6.1.1
Over recent years the objectives set for vocational training have expanded to an unprecedented degree. The result is that vocational training is no longer a separate field in its own right but is increasingly being integrated with other policies and strategies, both public and private. It is thus called on to adapt its educational teaching to practical realities, to support the modernisation and growth of enterprises, to increase productivity and to combat the exclusion and unemployment that has become an enduring feature of our society.

6.1.2
The problem of the skill levels of the workforce arises clearly in France, where 30 % of this population has no vocational diploma and over 100 000 young people leave the school system every year without a qualification. In this field the challenge is twofold: to bring the education system closer to the working world, but also, within the education system, to reinstate the position of technical education, which has suffered from being held in little regard in society compared with general academic education.

6.1.3
The paradoxical demands in the field of young people's qualifications are the need to impart a sufficiently broad education for them to keep up with developments in jobs and qualifications and to be adaptable, while at the same time giving them the specific training they need if they are to find their place within the world of employment.

6.1.4
This effort on the part of the initial training system, whose main lines of development we have described, must be accompanied by an even greater effort on the part of the continuing training system. The demographic structure of France, in common with that of almost every other EU country, is characterised by an ageing population and a low birth rate, linked with the rapid development of technology, the content of jobs and qualifications, which means that there must be constant access to training. In this field the challenge faces both the continuing training system, which must develop routes of access to vocational training, and for employers who have to integrate training into their development more than they do today.

6.1.5
It is still a characteristic of the management of French enterprises that it prefers to resort to forms of quantitative and external flexibility. This means that it resorts to

making people redundant in times of difficulty and recruits manpower on a temporary basis (under short-term or temporary contracts) during periods of economic revival. Practices of this kind are a brake on internal flexibility, especially the introduction of policies on the forward management of employment and skills. A policy on a company's training, in particular on training linked with future qualifications, relates only to the stable core of its workforce, which is tending to shrink.

The introduction of specific personal training leave for people who have contracts for a specified term, referring them back to temporary agencies for the training of temporary workers, is a clear demonstration of how the training of these categories of workers is being externalised and how they are not being taken into account, in other than quantitative ways, in management strategy. The challenge of growing competitiveness for enterprises is also the challenge of establishing human resource management policies that take into account the management of skills and therefore of training.

6.1.6
Apart from these economic challenges and the challenges of qualifying people in general to meet the needs of the economy and to develop continuing training under the skills management policies of employers, vocational training must respond to the social challenges.

6.1.7
The first of these challenges is not without its effects on the success of the reforms currently being implemented in initial vocational training. The need is to make our training system more egalitarian by reducing the importance of the initial training diploma in an individual's career.

Growing access to continuing training, apart from offering a second chance to people who have left the education system too hastily, will also help the short vocational training courses to perform their role to the full. It will be all the easier to direct some pupils and students towards this type of course in that they will not forfeit all hopes of future training and career progression, which is on the whole the case today.

6.1.8
The second social challenge is not individual but collective: it is concerned with the establishment of a policy on employment and training that will prevent the exclusion from the working world of those young people who continue to leave the school system without qualifications, employees who are made redundant without any back-up measures to help them retrain for other work, the long-term unemployed and marginalised groups such as the illiterate, immigrants and people with special difficulties.

The implementation of such a policy is no longer just a matter of the right to work and management practices, even though employers have a role to play in this action, but more of recourse to vocational training under public-sector policies such as policy on cities and regional development, health and integration. The campaign against the exclusion from economic and social life must inevitably be conducted by recourse to training.

6.1.9
At every level of the economy and at all levels of employment, vocational training is a prime issue. Europe's main advantage, perhaps its only advantage, in international competition lies in its population's educational and cultural standards; the prerequisite for its competitiveness confronted with the new industrialised countries is to maintain this level through the quality of the training it provides.

The effects of Europe

6.1.10
The impact of Europe may be exercised in two ways: through training policy conducted at the level of the European Community and through the consequences of opening up frontiers since 1993.

6.1.11
On the first point, a distinction should be made between the two types of action conducted by the Community. The action of the Structural Funds, whose aim is to help restore the balance among different regions in Europe, may have major financial implications on the macroeconomic level, but it does not have a decisive influence over developments in the French training system, for at least two reasons: the first is that this is a policy for the support of national policies and it therefore operates in a subsidiary manner; the second lies in the fact that, after the reform of the Structural Funds, Community financing is concentrated on areas eligible for the Objective I and that, for France, only the Overseas Territories (Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana, Réunion) and Corsica are included among those regions.

6.1.12
Regarding the second type of action conducted by the Community, in other words the implementation of European programmes, the effects on the French training system, in particular on the providers of training and employers, are no doubt far more important. The diversity of these programmes does in fact correspond to the diversity of the French training market.

France is one of the countries submitting most proposals in response to Community invitations to tender. This enthusiasm for Europe testifies both to the capacity for innovation that exists within training agencies and the resolve to establish a position at European level.

6.1.13
On the other hand the action conducted by the Community in the field of social policy does not seem to be having a radical influence on the system of continuing training, which is more highly developed than most other European countries. The adoption of a directive on recognition of the right of access to training for workers in the form of training leave would not, for example, add to the legal heritage of French employees, since they already enjoy that right.

6.1.14
The arrival of the single European market will no doubt have two profound influences on the French system. The first will be on enterprises. The single market and the growing competition that it is likely to entail are of such a kind as to accelerate the development of enterprises and therefore the search for new skills, a

demand that can be satisfied internally by a policy on the management of skills or externally through recruitment.

Apart from the additional skills that vocational training will have to provide, the opening-up of frontiers implies that new forms of training must be integrated into management policy: training in the cultures of other countries in the European Community, language training, training in the management techniques of other countries, etc. Training is part of the set of tools that will enable employees to work on a European scale.

6.1.15
In the second place, vocational training will be affected by the opening of frontiers in that it is an economic sector subject to the growth of competition and, inversely, a sector in which French training agencies may well be potential exporters. If there is one field in which French training agencies lag behind their neighbours, particularly English-speaking countries, it is in new educational technologies.

Furthermore, as we have pointed out in the previous chapter, the market for vocational training in France has not really been competitive, but it has been marked by rigid flows of funds (public-sector providers supplying their training to public-sector clients, private-sector providers selling their training to the private sector, for example). The arrival of true competition and the need to act on a European scale will necessarily raise the problem of restructuring this market and lead to regrouping – something, moreover, which the French authorities favour.

6.2 What solutions for tomorrow?

6.2.1
Faced with all the questions raised for the vocational training system, several responses are being outlined as regards the level of the role that each of the parties should perform and the measures that could be adopted.

A new strategy for the parties involved

6.2.2
The signature of the agreement of 3 July 1991 clearly marked the resolve of the social partners to participate actively in piloting the vocational training system, but also to take part in vocational training policy as a whole, as testified by the first part of the agreement, which is on preliminary technology training. This resolve is approved by the authorities. There is even an implicit will to press ahead with individual partners. It seems that the State wants not so much to administer the training system itself, which would call for the involvement of everyone, as to create conditions for the effective implementation of training, for example by developing techniques of 'administrative engineering' and measures for evaluating the system. The State appears, however, to intend to retain its initiative on policies on employment and combating exclusion.

6.2.3
The social partners, then, have found fresh autonomy in the agreement of 3 July 1991, but it is above all in making alternance training more widespread that they are called upon to invest their efforts.

Alternance as a principle of training

6.2.4
The demands made of alternance training are to adapt instruction to economic realities, to pave the way for the integration of young people, but also adults, into society and the working world, to contribute towards the campaign against unemployment, to provide a remedy for manpower shortages, etc. As we can see, alternance is being asked to provide the solution to most of the challenges that we have identified in this report.

6.2.5
Underlying the term alternance, there are three separate subjects: the reform of national education, recognition of the role of the trainer in the work situation and the need to find additional ways and means of coping with the effort to raise the skill levels of the workforce.

6.2.6
A definition is still needed of what is covered by the term 'alternance'. It may imply school pupils' or school students' transition to the workplace or the distinction between theoretical teaching and practical instruction, or again it may be a special apprenticeship teaching methodology which is implemented in two separate places.

6.2.7
The role of the training enterprise will differ depending on which definition is chosen. One of the conditions for the development of alternance is that employers should be prepared to perform this new role. It should be borne in mind that in France apprenticeship occurs mainly in craft trades; large enterprises, especially in industry, are scarcely involved in the training of young people.

A number of support measures, such as the training of apprentice masters and tutors responsible for taking on youngsters, or thinking as to the arrangements for taking in and training young people, must therefore be conducted before alternance training is established on a wide scale.

The system's financing needs

6.2.8
Despite the large volume of expenditure on education and training (see 4.2.2) the financing needs for training are far from being met. Bearing in mind that the State funds almost 70 % of the total expenditure and that efforts over the past few years have raised that expenditure to such a high level, it seems inevitable that it will have to level out. Additional funding must therefore be sought not out of the public purse but out of private spending. A point of note is that the proportion contributed towards education expenditure by employers and parents is lower in France than in the United States, Japan or Germany.

6.2.9
It is therefore essential that systems to supply financial expertise, which are not very highly developed today, be set up so that private expenditure on training can rise at an adequate rate and effectively overtake the growth in public spending, which is likely to rise at a slower rate than in the past few years.

6.2.10
As regards employers, the agreement of 3 July 1991 and the law of 31 December 1991 have increased the rates of contribution of employers to the funding of vocational training and created an obligation for enterprises with fewer than 10 employees to participate. The State has also announced that it would take into account the demands of employers to have their expenditure on training treated as intangible investments.

6.2.11
With household spending, financial participation could take several forms. On the one hand, the agreement of 3 July 1991 raises the principle of co-financing, in the form of unpaid work, by employees taking long training courses leading to a qualification. This principle, hotly debated during negotiations, paves the way for taking greater account of training in contracts of employment and the negotiation of incentive mechanisms within the enterprise, for those going on training (certain in-company agreements, for example, have replaced length-of-service bonuses by qualification bonuses).

6.2.12
This principle of employees financing part of their training also creates the problem of the financial solutions suited to individuals. If an employee in effect participates financially, why should his expenses not be treated on a par with the employer's so that he can deduct them from his tax? This principle of the tax deductibility of personal training expenses exists in Germany. The French authorities have always been reluctant to embody this principle in law so as not to encourage employers to pass on to employees the responsibility for funding training.

Other financial mechanisms may be devised, however, to promote the initiative and participation of individuals: zero-interest loans or loans at concessionary rates, loans with deferred repayment along the lines of student loans, etc.

6.2.13
The banking and insurance sector has not really entered the field of training and offers few financial services suited to individuals, enterprises or training agencies, which often have cash flow difficulties, in order to meet the financing need of this sector of the economy. Such a shortcoming might persuade the training insurance funds to claim this role of funder of investment (up to now all they have done is to refund training costs).

Market structure

6.2.14
As we have pointed out, the training market is characterised by the number and diversity of training agencies. The effect of this characteristic has been a fragmentation of supply and a smaller financial base for most agencies. It will be

recalled that 16 % of all training agencies have a turnover of more than FRF 1 million, and that only 4 % have a turnover of over FRF 5 million (i.e. about 700 agencies, representing on their own 54 % of the market). A minimum threshold of financial and training capability is required to make the technological and human investment that is vital to the conduct of research and development, training engineering, the exporting of skills and products, the adaptation of training provision to different target groups or economic sectors, etc.

6.2.15
The restructuring of the vocational training market is essential if it is to find a foothold on the European level. The principal funders of training, the authorities, intend to play their part in this restructuring, although they are aware that an effort must also be made by the employers and the social partners and by the professionals themselves.

Other prospects

6.2.16
It is impossible to draw up a list of all the sectors in which vocational training is likely to develop. Nevertheless, in addition to the strategy of the parties concerned, alternance training, financing needs and market restructuring, we could mention four other paths along which the system may develop: support for the development of skills within the workplace, improvements in administrative action, the problems of certification and the question of the breakdown of working time and training time.

6.2.17
The provision of support for the development of skills within the workplace is a delicate problem for the authorities, in that they do not wish to interfere in the administrative and management policies of enterprises even if they could. They feel, however, that they should be encouraging management practices that integrate training into thinking and into broader action covering the forward management of employment and skills and the organisation of labour. The resolve is to encourage enterprises to move away from a quantitative, external system of management of labour problems to an internal management. Negotiated modernisation is a direct incentive to set up such systems, but the future seems to lie less with direct aid than in indirect incentives, in particular by involving the employer more in training. In other words, here again alternance is the hope for the future.

6.2.18
The problem of administrative action arises in the implementation of social integration policies. To reconcile policies on cities, health, integration, education, regional development, employment and training with common objectives and structures that work together would seem to be an impossible task. This is, however, the challenge that the State has to take up, by acting with groups that have the responsibility for each of these policies but cannot provide a satisfactory response on their own.

The development of specific techniques of administrative law and the setting-up of special administrative engineering are prerequisites for the campaign against exclusion. The new thinking on the integration of young people into society and the

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This multiplicity of titles and diplomas has the advantage of making it easier to recognise training courses that are of special interest in a given sector or for a given target group. On the other hand, its drawback is that it is hard to find out about these titles and diplomas and to take them into account under a collective agreement.

5.1.5
Collective agreements define the qualifications and the duties attached to those qualifications. The possession of a title or diploma is sometimes essential to gain access to the qualification recognised by the collective agreement. Nevertheless, in accordance with the principles of the right to work, the qualification will be issued by the employer and, in the event of a dispute, it will be established in the light of the duties actually performed, rather than the individual's personal qualifications.

The problem of recognition by the enterprise of the qualifications acquired by employees is still unresolved. The representatives of the employers have consistently refused to establish mechanisms or procedures for the automatic recognition of qualifications acquired by employees through a training course.

5.1.6
Certification issued by branches of trade and industry is another method of recognising occupational titles. This new path to validation has the special feature of being organised under the auspices of the *Commissions paritaires nationales de* l'emploi (CPNE). These joint national employment boards are set up by the branches of trade or industry and their terms of reference cover the subject of training and employment (see 4.1.40). They define the procedure and criteria for the creation of *Certificats de qualification professionnelle* (CQP – vocational qualification certificates). The evaluation of a qualification acquired is organised under the responsibility of an assessment board supervised by the competent CPNE. It is based on the organisation of qualification tests and an evaluation of occupational competences as displayed in a work situation.

This method of validation, originally centred on qualification contracts, is expanding in certain branches to all the training measures aimed at those in employment.

The concept of the CQP is to prepare as closely as possible for a qualification that is defined by the sector of industry or trade and that can be directly used in the workplace. It also helps to bridge the certification gap in the range of titles and diplomas issued, as well as supplementing one of those titles or diplomas. In 1995 there were some 150 CQPs. Widely differing branches of trade or industry are concerned with this method of certification, but as yet few people have been certified by this route (about 3 000 in 1995).

5.1.7
Two laws, one enacted in 1985, the other in 1992, permit the validation of occupational achievements for the issue of diplomas. The aim is to introduce the opportunity for anyone who has engaged in an occupation for five years to ask for his occupational achievements to be recognised as evidence of the knowledge and abilities required in obtaining a diploma. Validation is granted by a board of teachers and persons competent in the activities concerned. Its effect is to waive the obligation for the person to pass some of the tests for the diploma concerned, or to enable him to apply for admission to training at a higher level than that which he has initially achieved.

Annexes

Annex 1

Acronyms and abbreviations

		paragraphs
AFPA	Association pour la formation professionnelle des adultes Association for the Vocational Training of Adults	4.1.15
AFR	Allocation de formation-reclassement Training-retraining allowance	3.3.50
Agefal	Association pour la gestion des fonds de l'alternance Association for the Management of Alternance Training Funds	3.2.67
ANFH	Association nationale pour la formation du personnel hospitalier National Association for Hospital Training	3.3.45
ANPE	Agence nationale pour l'emploi National Agency for Employment	4.1.14
APEC	Association pour l'emploi des cadres Association for the Employment of Middle Management	3.3.76
APP	Atelier pédagogique personnalisé Personalised training workshops	4.1.61
ASFO	Association de formation Training association	3.2.65
Bac Pro	Baccalauréat professionnel Vocational baccalaureate	3.2.7
BEP	Brevet d'études professionnelles Diploma of occupational studies	3.2.72
BEPA	Brevet d'études professionnelles agricoles Diploma in vocational agricultural studies	3.2.27
BT	Brevet de technicien Technician's diploma	3.2.11 Table 5
Btn	Baccalauréat de technicien Technological baccalaureate	2.1.3
BTA	Brevet de technicien agricole Agricultural technician's diploma	3.2.25
BTS	Brevet de technicien supérieur Advanced technician's diploma	3.2.10
CA	Contrat d'adaptation Adaptation contract	3.2.57

CAP	Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle Certificate of vocational aptitude	3.2.2
CAPA	Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle agricole Certificate of vocational agricultural aptitude	3.2.27
CEREQ	Centre d'études et de recherche sur l'emploi et les qualifications Centre for Studies and Research on Employment and Qualifications	4.1.9
CES	Contrat emploi-solidarité Employment-solidarity contract	3.2.75
CET	Collège d'enseignement technique Technical Education School	3.2.4
CFA	Centre de formation des apprentis Apprentice Training Centre	3.2.43
CFDT	Confédération française démocratique du travail French Confederation of Labour	4.1.42
CFI	Crédit formation individualisé (pour les jeunes) Personalised training entitlement (for young people)	3.2.70
CFTC	Confédération française des travailleurs chrétiens French Confederation of Christian Workers	4.1.42
CGC	Confédération générale des cadres General Confederation of Middle Management	4.1.42
CGPME	Confédération générale des petites et moyennes enterprises General Confederation of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises	4.1.42
CGT	Confédération générale du travail General Confederation of Labour	4.1.42
CIBC	Centre interinstitutionnel de bilan de compétences Inter-institutional Centre for the Skills Audit	3.3.77
CIDF	Centre d'information sur le droit des femmes Information Centre on Women's Rights	3.3.79
CIDJ	Centre d'information et de documentation pour la jeunesse Information and Documentation Centre for Young People	3.2.96
CIE	Contrat initiative-emploi Employment initiative contract	3.3.51
CIF	Congé individuel de formation Personal training leave	3.3.6

CIO	Centre d'information et d'orientation Information and Guidance Centre	3.2.89
CLD	Chômeur de longue durée Long-term unemployed (person)	
CNAM	Conservatoire national des arts et métiers National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts	3.3.70
CNASEA	Centre national pour l'aménagement des structures des exploitations agricoles National Centre for the Development of Agricultural Enterprise Structures	Table 9
CNED	Centre national d'enseignement à distance National Centre for Distance Training	3.3.71
CNFPT	Centre national pour la formation dans la fonction publique territoriale National Centre for the Training of Local Authority Employees	3.3.41
CNPF	Confédération nationale du patronat français National Joint Management/Union Committee for Vocational Training	4.1.42
CO	Contrat d'orientation Guidance contract	3.2.50
CODEF:	Comité départemental de la formation professionnelle, de la promotion sociale et de l'emploi Département Committee for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment	4.1.17
Copacif	Comité paritaire pour les questions liées au congé individuel de formation Joint Management/Union Committee for Matters Associated with the Personal Training Leave	3.3.15
Copire	Commissions paritaires interprofessionnelles régionales pour l'emploi Joint Regional Inter-industry Employment Boards	4.1.41
COREF	Comité régional de la FPPSE Regional Committee for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment	4.1.36
CPA	Classe de pré-apprentissage Pre-apprenticeship class	Figure 6
CPC	Commission professionelle consultative Joint Advisory Board	4.1.30

CPNE	Commission paritaire nationale de l'emploi National Joint Employment Boards	4.1.40
CPNFP	Comité paritaire national pour la formation professionnelle National Joint Management/Union Committee for Vocational Training	4.1.42
CPPN	Classe pré-professionnelle de niveau Pre-vocational class	Figure 6
CPR/CPTR	Centre psychotechnique régional Regional psychotechnic centres	4.1.15
CQ	Contrat de qualification Qualification contract	3.2.53
CRIJ	Centre régional d'information de la jeunesse Regional Information Centre for Young People	3.2.96
DAFCO	Délégation académique à la formation continue Academic Commission for Continuing Training	4.1.20
DDTEFP	Direction départementale du travail, de l'emploi et de la formation professionnelle Département Directorate of Labour, Employment and Vocational Training	4.1.19
DE	Délégation à l'emploi Commission for employment	4.1.10
DESS	Diplôme d'études supérieures spécialisées Diploma in specialist higher studies	3.2.19
DEUST	Diplôme d'études universitaires scientifiques et techniques University diploma of scientific and technical university studies	3.2.19
DFP	Délégation à la formation professionnelle Commission for vocational training	4.1.10
DRAF	Direction régionale de l'agriculture et de la forêt	Figure 16
DRASS	Direction régionale des affaires sanitaires et sociales	Figure 16
DRIRE	Direction régionale de l'industrie, de la recherche et de l'environnement	Figure 16
DRTEFP:	Directions régionales du travail, de l'emploi et de la formation professionnelle Regional Directorate for Labour, Employment and Vocational Training	4.1.17
DUT	Diplôme universitaire de technologie University diploma of technology	3.2.10

FACT	Fonds pour l'amélioration des conditions de travail Fund for the improvement of working conditions	3.3.55
FAF	Fonds d'assurance formation Training insurance fund	3.2.65
FEN	Fédération des syndicats de l'éducation nationale Federation of National Education Unions	4.1.4
FFP	Fédération de la formation professionnelle Vocational Training Federation	5.2.2
FNE	Fonds national pour l'emploi National fund for employment	3.1.8
FO	Force ouvrière (CGT-FO) Force ouvrière (common name, although precise name is CGT-Force ouvrière)	4.1.42
Fongecif	Fonds pour la gestion du congé individuel de formation Regional joint management/union bodies administering personal training leave in the inter-industry sector	3.3.12
FPA	Formation professionelle des adultes Adult vocational training	3.1.5
FPPSE	Formation professionnelle, promotion sociale et emploi Vocational training, social advancement and employment	4.1.31
GNC	Groupe national de contrôle de la formation professionnelle National Vocational Training Supervisory Group	4.1.11
GRETA	Groupement d'établissements de l'éducation nationale pour la formation professionnelle continue Groups of Secondary Education Establishments for Continuing Training	4.1.20
IEP	Institut d'études politiques Institute of Political Studies	Figure 9
INSEE	Institut national des statistiques et des études économiques National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies	1.2.3
IUT	Institut universitaire de technologie University institute of technology	3.2.15
LP	Lycée professionnel Vocational lycée	3.2.4
MIAGE	Maîtrise d'informatique appliqué à la gestion Higher diploma in information technology applied to management	3.2.19

MIF	Maison de l'information sur la formation Training information centre	
MSG	Maîtrise en sciences de gestion Higher diploma in management science	3.2.19
MST	Maîtrise en sciences et techniques Diploma in science and technology	3.2.19
Onisep	Office national d'information sur les emplois et les professions National Board for the Provision of Information on Jobs and Careers	3.2.87
Opacif	Organisme paritaire de gestion du congé individuel de formation Joint Body for the Supervision of the Personal Training Leave	3.3.9
OPCA	Organisme paritaire collecteur agréé Joint Accredited Collection Agency	3.3.80
PAIO	Permanence d'accueil, d'information et d'orientation Reception, Information and Guidance Centre	3.2.98
PAQUE	Préparation active à la qualification et à l'emploi Active preparation for qualifications and employment	Table 9
PLF	Projet de loi de finances Finance Bill	4.2.3, 4.2.10
SAE	Stage d'accès à l'entreprise Placement preparing for access to employment	3.3.50
SIFE	Stage d'insertion et de formation à l'emploi Integration and job training placement	3.3.51
SIVP	Stage d'initiation à la vie professionnelle Placement for introduction to working life	3.2.49
SMIC	Salaire minimum interprofessionelle de croissance National minimum wage	3.2.41
STS	Section de techniciens supérieurs Higher technicians section	3.2.14
Unedic	Union nationale pour l'emploi dans l'industrie et le commerce National Union for Employment in Industry and Commerce	3.3.50
UPA	Union professionnelle artisanale Crafts Management Union	4.1.42

Annex 2

Main organisations

1. **PUBLIC SECTOR**

a) Ministerial departments

Ministère de l'emploi et de la solidarité
1, place de Fontenoy
F-75007 PARIS
Tel. (33) 144 38 38 38 Fax (33) 144 38 34 08
Internet: http://www.travail.gouv.fr

Délégation générale à l'emploi et à la formation professionnelle
7, square Max Hymans
F-75741 PARIS Cedex 15
Tel. (33) 144 38 38 38 Fax (33) 144 38 33 00
Internet: http://www.travail.gouv.fr/index_emploi.html

Comité de coordination des programmes régionaux
55, rue Saint-Dominique
F-75007 PARIS
Tel. (33) 144 38 38 38 Fax (33) 144 38 34 42

Direction de l'animation de la recherche, des études et des statistiques (DARES)
20 *bis*, rue d'Estrées
F-75007 PARIS
Tel. (33) 144 38 38 38 Fax (33) 144 38 24 38

Ministère de l'éducation nationale, de la recherche et de la technologie
110, rue de Grenelle
F-75007 PARIS
Tel. (33) 149 55 10 10
Internet: http://www.education.gouv.fr

b) Other public bodies

AFPA (Association nationale pour la formation professionnelle des adultes)
13, place du Général-de-Gaulle
F-93108 MONTREUIL Cedex
Tel. (33) 148 70 50 00 Fax (33) 148 70 74 70
Internet: http://www.afpa.fr

ANPE (Agence nationale pour l'emploi)
4, rue Galilée
F-93198 NOISY-LE-GRAND Cedex
Tel. (33) 149 31 74 00 Fax (33) 143 05 67 86
Internet: http://www.anpe.fr

Centre INFFO (Centre pour le développement de l'information sur la formation permanente)
Tour Europe
F-92049 Paris-la-Défense Cedex 07
Tel. (33) 141 25 22 22 Fax (33) 147 73 74 20
Minitel: 36 15 code INFFO
Internet: http://www.centre-inffo.fr

CEREQ (Centre d'études et de recherche sur les qualifications)
10, place de la Joliette
BP 176
F-13474 MARSEILLE Cedex 2
Tel. (33) 491 13 28 28 Fax (33) 491 13 28 80
Internet: http://www.cereq.fr

CIDJ (Centre d'information et documentation pour la jeunesse)
101, quai Branly
F-75015 PARIS
Tel. (33) 144 49 12 00 Fax (33) 140 65 02 61
Minitel: 3615 code CIDJ
Internet: http://www.cidj.asso.fr

CNAM (Conservatoire national des arts et métiers)
292, rue Saint-Martin
F-75003 PARIS
Tel. (33) 140 27 20 00 Fax (33) 142 71 93 29
Internet: http://www.cnam-paysdelaloire.fr

CNOUS (Centre national des œuvres universitaires et scolaires)
69, quai d'Orsay
F-75007 PARIS
Tel. (33) 144 18 53 00 Fax (33) 145 55 48 49
Internet: http://www.cnous.fr

CNOUS Accueil des étrangers en France
6, rue Jean Calvin
F-75005 PARIS
Tel. (33) 140 79 91 00 Fax. (33) 143 37 44 78
Internet: http://www.cnous.fr

Onisep (Office national d'information sur les enseignements et les professions)
B. Thimonnier Lognes
BP 86
77423 MARNE-LA-VALLÉE Cedex 2
Tel. (33) 164 80 35 00 Fax (33) 164 80 35 01
Minitel: 36 15 code Onisep
Internet: http://www.onisep.fr

2. SOCIAL PARTNERS

a) Employers' associations

CGPME (Confédération générale des petites et moyennes entreprises)
10, terrasse Bellini
F-92806 PUTEAUX Cedex
Tel. (33) 147 62 73 73 Fax (33) 147 73 08 86
Internet: http://www.cgpme.com

CNPF (Conseil national du patronat français)
31, avenue Pierre-1er-de-Serbie
F-75784 PARIS Cedex 16
Tel. (33) 140 69 44 44 Fax (33) 147 23 47 32
Internet: http://www.cnfp.fr

b) Trade union bodies

CFDT (Confédération française démocratique du travail)
4, bd de la Villette
F-75019 PARIS
Tel. (33) 142 03 80 00 Fax (33) 142 03 81 44
Internet: http://www.cfdt.fr

CFTC (Confédération française des travailleurs chrétiens)
13, rue des Écluses-Saint-Martin
F-75483 PARIS Cedex 10
Tel. (33) 144 52 49 00 Fax (33) 144 52 49 28
Internet: http://www.ifrance.com/cftc85100

CGT (Confédération générale du travail)
263, rue de Paris
F-93516 MONTREUIL Cedex
Tel. (33) 148 18 80 00 Fax (33) 149 88 18 57
Internet: http://www.cgt.fr

CGT-FO (Confédération générale du travail-Force ouvrière)
141, av. du Maine
F-75014 PARIS
Tel. (33) 140 52 82 00 Fax (33) 140 52 84 08
Internet: http://www.force-ouvriere.fr

3. CHAMBERS OF TRADE

ACFCI
(Assemblée des Chambres françaises de commerce et d'industrie)
45, av. d'Iéna
BP 448.16
F-75769 PARIS Cedex 16
Tel. (33) 140 69 37 00 Fax (33) 147 20 34 48
Internet: http://www.acfci.cci.fr

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Annex 4

Glossary

The brief list of terms set out below, together with an explanation of the way they are used in this monograph, has been produced by the author. The reader is referred to Cedefop's current work on terminology and vocational training, in particular its *Glossarium of vocational training* in nine languages, published in 1996, which is also available on the Internet.

Agrément – Validation
Decision by the authorities that people taking a training course are entitled to remuneration. This means that a validated training course is training that entitles those who take it to remuneration.

Bilan de compétences – Skills audit
A review whose purpose is to define an individual's personal and job skills, as well as his aptitudes and motivation.

Branche professionnelle – Branch of occupation
Sector of the economy.

Collectivité territoriale – Local authority
This is also known by the term *collectivité locale* it is a public body responsible for the running of an administrative area. Such authorities include communes, which are administered by a municipal council, *départements*, which are administered by a *conseil général*, or general council, and regions, administered by a regional council.

Comité d'entreprise – Works committee
A body that represents the collective interests of employees. The works committee consists of members elected by the staff, union representatives and the employer. The law requires a works committee to be set up in all enterprises with a workforce of at least 50 people.

Convention collective – Collective convention
A convention signed by organisations representing employers and employees. If it refers to just one specific point, it is called an **accord collectif**, or collective agreement. If its implementation is not immediate and compulsory, it is known as an **accord-cadre** (framework agreement).

Conventionnement – Funding under a convention
Financing by the authorities of the running of a training measure. This funding is covered by a convention.

Demandeur d'emploi de longue durée – Long-term jobseeker
A jobseeker who has been registered with the *Agence nationale pour l'emploi* for over 12 months. The abbreviations more commonly used are **DELD** or **CLD** (*chômeur de longue durée*).

Formation initiale – Initial training
Training provided before the person embarks upon working life.

Formation professionnelle continue – Continuing training
The training of people who have already embarked upon their working lives.

Homologation – official recognition
Official national recognition of the level of a training course.

INSEE
Institut national de statistiques et des études économiques – the French national institute of statistics and economic studies. Provides most of the statistics on the country's economic activity and population.

Interprofessionnel – Inter-industry
An adjective referring to several occupations belong to separate sectors of activity or occupational branches. Trade union confederations or confederations of employers' associations are known as '*interprofessionnelles*' or inter-industry.

Paritaire – Joint management/union
Refers to a body on which there is an equal number of representatives of unions and employers' associations. *Fonds d'assurance formation* (training insurance funds), for example, have a joint board of directors. The noun, **paritarisme**, refers to the general principle of co-management of training insurance funds.

Partenaires sociaux (Social partners)
The representatives of unions and employers' associations are known as the social partners.

SMEs
Small and medium-sized enterprises or industrial concerns. Enterprises with a regular workforce of up to 500 are regarded as SMEs.

SMIC
Salaire minimum interprofessionnel de croissance – Minimum inter-industry wage level. The authorities lay down a minimum hourly wage to which every wage earner is entitled. In April 1992, this was FRF 33.31.

Annex 5

Main laws, regulations and agreements on vocational training

I. Laws

The provisions of the various laws on training that are still in force today make up Book IX of the *Code du travail* (Labour Code) as it pertains to vocational training within the context of adult education.

Law 71-757, 16 July 1971
This law sets out principles which are still at the heart of training law today (including the duty placed on employers to contribute towards the funding of the training). It is regarded as the foundation of the current French training system.

Law 78-754, 17 July 1978
This law establishes a distinction between training undertaken on the employee's own initiative (*congé individuel de formation* – personal training leave) and training where the initiative comes from the employer (*plan de formation* – training plan).

Ordinance, 24 March 1982
This establishes a scheme for providing preliminary contact, information and guidance to young people aged 16 to 18; since its issue, it has been extended to young people aged 16 to 25.

Law 83-635, 7 January 1983
This law defines the breakdown of responsibilities for vocational training between the State and the regions.

Law 84-130, 24 January 1984
This reforms the whole vocational training system along the lines mapped out in 1971 by setting up a system for the funding of individual leave and by developing negotiations on training at the level of occupational branches and companies. It also covers the forms of alternance training created by the social partners in 1983.

Law 90-579, 4 July 1990
This law establishes the right to a qualification for all workers in the form of *crédit-formation* (training credit). It reinforces the obligations incumbent on training agencies and their supervision.

Law 91-1405, 31 December 1991
This law embodies the main provisions of the agreement reached by the social partners in July 1991 (greater participation on the part of employers, extension of the arrangement to enterprises employing fewer than 10 people, reform of alternance training, etc.).

Law 92-675, 17 July 1992
The law adapts the legislative provisions relating to apprenticeship in line with the efforts made in recent years to re-launch apprenticeship. The law officially deals with the issue of the company as a training venue and the sharing of responsibility with training centres and the Ministry of Education.

Law 93-121, 27 January 1993
This law modifies the funding of alternance training. The contribution to the funding of alternance training is increased from 0.03 % to 0.40 % for companies which are subject to the apprenticeship levy.

Five year Law 93-1313, 20 December 1993
This law reforms the funding of vocational training (reopens the question of the approvals of all the joint bodies) and seeks to develop alternance training measures and the individual rights of employees, particularly in conjunction with the reduction or adaptation of working hours (training time account). It also establishes the gradual decentralisation of vocational training for young people.

Decree of 28 October 1994
The decree lays down the new conditions for the approval of OPCAS. The agreements signed by the social partners at the end of 1994 in application of this decree reduce the number of joint collection agencies from 250 to 150.

Law 95-116, 4 February 1995
This law requires training organisations to be approved by the State after they have been in operation for three years (Coasguen amendment). The law allows the training time account to be funded through use of half of the contribution earmarked for personal training leave.

Law of 6 May 1996
This law reforms the funding of apprenticeship. In particular it provides for the establishment of a new unified system of subsidies linked to the engagement and training of apprentices.

II. National inter-industry agreements

The founding agreement is the national inter-industry agreement of 9 July 1970. All subsequent texts were adopted in the form of codicils to this first agreement, up to the national inter-industry agreement of 3 July 1991, which revised all the negotiated agreements and consolidated them in a single text.

Agreement of 9 July 1970
The first text to introduce the right to training in labour law, this agreement set up the *Congé individuel de formation* (personal training leave).

Codicil of 9 July 1976
Strengthened the role of the works committee as regards training.

Codicil of 21 September 1982
Organised a system for the funding of the *congé individuel de formation* (personal training leave) outside the workplace.

Codicil of 26 October 1983
Created various forms of alternance training (SIVP, *contrat d'adaptation, contrat de qualification*).

Agreement of 20 October 1986
Organised retraining measures for redundant employees.

Agreement of 3 July 1991
Incorporates all the negotiated agreements on vocational training. It covers individual leave, the financing of training, employer/union management of amounts paid out by employers and individual and collective rights of wage-earners to training, in many cases altering the financial aspects of preceding agreements.

Inter-industry agreement of 5 July 1994
This agreement is the social partners response to the five-year law of December 1993. Unlike the law, it provides for the maintenance of *contrats d'insertion en alternance* as defined by the agreement of 1991, it provides for a reform of training insurance which goes beyond the law creating OPCAs, and asserts the social partners' competence for apprenticeship.

All the laws, regulations and agreements applicable in 1995 are compiled in a Centre INFFO publication entitled *Les textes de la formation professionelle continue*, 360 pp., Paris, 1995 (ISBN 2 908940 81 7).

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